10-2005

interlitteraria

Tartu Ülikooli maailmakirjanduse õppetooli ja Eesti Võrdleva Kirjandusteaduse Assotsiatsiooni rahvusvaheline aastakiri.

Annual international refereed edition of the Chair of Comparative Literature of Tartu University and the Estonian Association of Comparative Literature.

Edition annuelle internationale de la Chaire de Littérature Comparée de l'Université de Tartu et de l'Association Estonienne de Littérature Comparée.

Internationales Jahrbuch des Lehrstuhls für Weltliteratur an der Universität Tartu und der Assoziation der Vergleichenden Literaturwissenschaft in Estland.

Edición anual international de la Cátedra de Literatura Comparada de la Universidad de Tartu y de la Asociación Estonia de Literatura Comparada.

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Kirjastaja ja levitaja/Publisher and Distributor:
Tartu Ülikooli Kirjastus/Tartu University Press, Tiigi 78, Tartu 50410, Eesti/Estonia
tel.: +372 737 5945, fax: +372 737 5944, e-mail: tyk@ut.ee, website: www.tyk.ee

Kujundaja/Designer:
Lemmi Koni

Printed and bound by Tartu University Press. Order No. 295

interlitteraria

10 · 2005

TARTU ÜLIKOOLI
KIRJASTUS

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Introductory Note

With the present *miscellanea*-issue, *Interlitteraria* is celebrating its tenth birthday. On this notable occasion we would like to congratulate as well as thank all our good friends and contributors from more than thirty countries of the world. By their learned efforts, we have been able to publish, since 1996, nearly 250 articles and essays, illuminating different aspects and fields of literary creation in the past and present and build a forum of dialogue between West and East, North and South.

Besides five monographic issues (1997 — "The Language of the Grotesque", 1999 — "World Poetry in the Postmodern Age", 2000 — "Culture and Nation at the Turn of the Millennium", 2002 — "World Drama on the Threshold of the 21st Century", 2004 — "Genre of the Novel in Contemporary World Literature") we have published a great variety of essays contributing to the research of the work of individual world authors — both the celebrated ones and those whose discovery remains still a the task for the future. It is quite possible that one of *Interlitteraria*'s main assets over the past years has been revealing to the international public authors, works and phenomena from the vast areas of world languages — not only from our native Estonian! — to which the general access is strongly inhibited, with scarce hopes, until now, of their redemption by their being translated into major international languages.

All this effort may not bear immediate fruits, but we hope in the long run — and *ars* is *longa* — it can still reveal its significance.

We must admit that *Interlitteraria*'s spread in the world, among the scholars of comparative literature and of more specialized fields, has still been restricted, at least to some extent. The Library of Tartu University sends *Interlitteraria*, by exchange, to nearly a hundred major libraries of the world, but this is naturally far from being sufficient, to provide general access to our annual journal. We are glad to say that recently there have been some advances in this sense. The content of the greater part of *Interlitteraria* is now accessible electronically, on the web.

People coming from different parts of the world to our conferences of comparative literature are often surprised to find in Tartu, a town of merely some 100,000 inhabitants — it is not the capital of Estonia! —

a cultural intensity and international openness that often is missing in much bigger world cities. They have mostly heard of Yuri Lotman (1922–1993) and the Tartu (or Tartu-Moscow) school of semiotics.

The Tartu phenomenon, however, is more complicated, going much deeper beyond the great figure of Lotman. The town, with its culture, is both national and supranational. Under the Soviet regime, a lot of its essence had to be clandestine, hidden.

Working in the major trends of postmodern cultural thought, coming from the Western centres, we probably tend to trust too much the visible ("positive"). We make stand out written discourses — though unwritten discourses may often have an even deeper meaning. We appreciate the visibility of translators — and are inclined to forget that the visibility is a direct result of a foreignness of a text. The foreign is (mostly) visible, the vernacular is (nearly) invisible.

In one of my introductory words (*Interlitteraria* 1999) I mentioned Pent Nurmekund, a great Estonian polyglot, one of the first outstanding Estonian orientalists, who worked for the cultural openness of Estonia under the Soviet occupation. Both he and Lotman could often be seen, not far from each other, bent over a book at the library of Tartu University. While Lotman, despite all difficulties and restrictions, finally became visible, a number of his works having been translated into other languages, besides his books being available in Russian, the language in which he wrote, to the international Slavists's circles, Pent Nurmekund has remained an almost invisible, legendary figure.

There have been so many others in Tartu, invisibly supporting culture as a creative dialogue with the world. Suffice to mention here only one more "invisible man", besides Nurmekund. This year (in 2005) 90 years lapsed since the birth of Arthur-Robert Hone (1915–1972), who was my own professor of English literature at the University of Tartu. He worked at the Department of West-European Literature and Classical Philology, just five meters from the Department of Russian Literature, headed by Yuri Lotman, on the same floor of the university's old "Language House"). His written heritage is scarce, he has not left us discourses of any greater significance.

And yet, Arthur-Robert Hone, by his "invisible discourses" fed the same spirit of intellectual openness and liberty, which more visibly (though, in those hard times, often forcibly metaphorically) emanated from the work of Yuri Lotman. A British citizen, Arthur-Robert Hone came to Estonia following the call of love — he was first married to the

Estonian poet Aira Kaal —, before the Second World War. He survived the harshness of the war and remained in Estonia, which after the war became a part of the Soviet Union. Until the beginning of the 1970s Hone was the only foreigner living permanently in Tartu (which, because of a nearby Soviet military airport, was practically closed to foreigners). Elsewhere (cf. *Interlitteraria* 4, 1999) I have mentioned a poem by Hando Runnel, in which the essence of Arthur-Robert Hone's presence here is wonderfully captured — though Runnel presents him as "invisible", in the sense that Hone's name is never mentioned in the poem.

It is in full accord with Hone's invisible cultural mission: riding his bicycle, with a lantern in his hand, he shed light in a dark time. He taught both English and American literature at the university and the history of music at the Tartu School of Music. A graduate of Cambridge in Romance philology, he also taught some Spanish at the university and in his lectures about Shakespeare did not speak only of the British bard and dramatist, but also of Calderón and Lope de Vega. He knew the Chinese language and was interested in Oriental philosophies. Under his guidance I myself, one of his last students, wrote my graduation thesis about literary contacts between Spain and England during the Renaissance. Hone was, thus, invisibly, one of our great pioneers and teachers in the field of comparative cultural studies.

Now these great men are no more. As they did not leave behind written discourses, they live on in our emotional memory and are likely to become legendary, when the precise memory starts to fail. Legends and myths will persist as the deepest layers of culture, despite losses.

With sorrow, we must record a recent loss among us. In November, last year, Natalia Tishunina, one of the participants of our Tartu international conference on world drama (September, 2001) has left us forever. We will remember her as a warm and good colleague from St. Petersburg, who valuably contributed to the conference and to *Interlitteraria* (7, 2002) with her research on William Butler Yeats's Oriental theatrical experience.

According to tradition, we hope to present this *miscellanea*-issue of *Interlitteraria* during the forthcoming Tartu international conference on the reception of world literature. The next issue of our annual journal (11, 2006) will gather the papers of the conference. The manuscripts should arrive by January 31, 2006.

Jüri Talvet,
Editor

The Brahminization of Theory. Commodity Fetishism and False Consciousness

DOROTHY FIGUEIRA

While postcolonial criticism traces its lineage to the critique of Orientalism initiated by Edward Said in the 1970s,[1] it can be analyzed further back to the anthropological model of Area Studies. It was in this form that the non-European world was first systematically studied and taught in the United States during the 1950s and 60s. In North American research institutions, Area Studies developed as a repudiation of the mode of conceptualizing the East that Said would later define as Orientalism. Its formation had everything to do with the Cold War and the demands of the national security state. Area Studies originated in the service language schools. It initially focused on Japanese, Korean, Chinese and Vietnamese language training, but grew to include most other Asian languages. Such programs met a Cold War need to communicate with potential enemies.

Area Studies specialists worked in conjunction with indigenous scholars. The research of native scholars relied on the authority of their personal experience and was structured to mirror the structures of explanation valued in Western scientific discourse (Hancock 1998:

[1] In his seminal book of the same title published in 1978, Edward Said defined "Orientalism" as the systematic stereotyping and degradation of the East that enabled Western colonial powers to victimize their subjects and consolidate hegemonic control. In the last two decades, practitioners of the critique of Orientalism have catalogued the myriad and grave sins of the West to such a degree that one might say that they have trivialized the discussion, engendering a form of fetishism, wherein all current Third-World ills are traced back to colonial oppression.

357). As "culture brokers," native informants derived social and material privilege from their efforts. Area Studies specialists then repackaged the native informant's experiential knowledge and disseminated it. Relying on the data provided by native informants, they created an objectifying discourse in which the site of a national culture was "imagined." In the case of India, these scholars documented and managed the internal others (tribals, peasants, minority populations), whom the barely nascent Indian state sought to mold into a nation. Area Studies specialists exercised hegemonic power by "privileging the contingent boundaries of the Indian state as natural delimiters of cultural forms" (Hancock 1998: 347). The native informants served as disciplinary gatekeepers providing an authoritative version of Indian history (Hancock 1998: 344) for upper caste Indians (reformers or nationalists) and the West. In fact, by their methodological reliance on native informants and political use of their data to affix claims on the nation, Area Studies specialists did not essentially differ from the Orientalists who preceded them. Both provided a conceptualization of Asia underwritten by state and private capital.[2] Both produced their own brand of Orientalism.

While postcolonial criticism replicates the sites traditionally apportioned to Area Studies, its scope is significantly different. Postcolonial criticism encompasses what Rey Chow has distinguished as the four major types of analysis in Cultural Studies:

1. The critique of Orientalism and its racial hierarchizing developed by Said
2. The Subaltern critique of class and gender, promulgated by Spivak
3. Minority discourse analysis influenced by Deleuze, Guattari and Jan Mohammed
4. The notion of hybridity championed by Bhabha (Chow 2002: 105–6).

In the following discussion, I would like to examine in greater depth how the production of postcoloniality informs the critic's attempts at self-fashioning. I will begin by showing how postcolonial criticism as a form of Cultural Studies has come to perform a similar function with regard to Indian national identity narratives, such as Orientalist scholars and Area Studies specialists carried out in the past. I will then

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[2] Area studies was also funded by private corporations and scholarly organizations such as the Ford, Rockefeller and Carnegie Foundations.

investigate how the focus of postcolonial criticism shifted in the process of its institutionalization. Once commodified, postcolonial criticism served development needs within the university, as well as identificatory structures both in the academe and the diaspora community at large.

I. Postcolonial Criticism's Disciplinary Roots

Cultural Studies developed out of the reformulation of language, with the shift away from the structural linguistic approach to an emphasis on the relations between representation and politics. In the wake of Structuralism, literature, once a central mode of aesthetic expression, had come to be viewed as an outmoded form of cultural capital belonging to the bourgeoisie. The paradigm shift from the literary to the Cultural Studies model presumably sought to install a more immediate and less conservative hierarchical format where cultural products of everyday life are valorized as responses to bourgeois elitism and the commodification of high art. Cultural Studies owes a great debt to the Structuralism of Roland Barthes and his general approach to performative self-fashioning (Rapaport 2001: 104). Following the trend established by Barthes in *Mythologies*, Cultural Studies enables a range of populist production (advertising and popular genres such as thrillers, romances, film, music and fashion) to be read like literary texts. Cultural Studies promotes a metaphysics of agency and presents a cult of vernacular experience as a substitute for historical analysis (San Juan 2002: 225).[3] In Area Studies, work had been undertaken in the name of scientific objectivity, knowledge acquisition, and cross-cultural understanding. Cultural Studies pretends no such innocent motivation. It presupposes the existence of exploitation and asymmetrical power relations inherent in all Western studies of non-Western culture. The sites previously studied in Area Studies would become deconstructed in Cultural Studies as target fields.

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[3] Cultural Studies has had a considerable impact on anthropology, where fieldwork, formerly a concrete place of research, could now be conceptualized as a methodological focus on hybridity and cosmopolitan experiences as much as rooted, native experiences (Clifford 1992: 101). Anthropology began to speak of travelling cultures, migration, exile, diaspora and borderlands.

Cultural Studies came into being in the context of what has been termed the "victim revolution" on campuses (D'Souza 1991: 191) and flourished in an era where concepts such as "truth" were read to mean "bias" and "knowledge" invariably was translated as ideology (Rapaport 2001: 98). Lawrence Grossberg, a key theorist in the field, envisioned Cultural Studies as taking place simultaneously with political critique and intervention (Grossberg 1992). This initial conceptualization proved to be the essential problem at the heart of Cultural Studies. If all popular practices are seen as positive resistance to domination, the very possibilities of any real revolutionary change are trivialized (San Juan 2002: 228). There can be no empowering if "everyday tactical dissembling" becomes politically progressive. The very substitution of a populist program is itself a trivialization of subaltern actors and local knowledges (San Juan 2002: 225). Cultural Studies very quickly degenerated into an apology for commodity fetishism. Essentially, there is no need for social struggle, if television and shopping were already "theaters of subversion" (Mulhern 1995: 40, cited in San Juan 2002: 227).

The shift from the aesthetic to the cultural studies model took place at roughly the same time that Area Studies had reached a crisis point, due to the change in priorities occasioned by global capitalism. As any region's historical and geographic boundaries becomes contested, its political and strategic value also undergoes redefinition. When such changes occur, institutions need to justify maintaining programs and scholars that people them (Hancock 1998: 373). Language programs, the former mainstay for graduate funding and faculty lines, are cut when they are no longer subsidized by Defense Department funding due to decreased global importance. Such radical shifts in strategic significance and funding occurred in Area Studies at roughly the same time that Said specifically linked the development of colonial knowledge to the beginnings of Orientalist scholarship and suggested that its growth was tied to Area Studies,[4] a latter-day institutionalization of Orientalism.

It was a bad time for Area Studies specialists in general. Their legitimization and funding were waning at the very moment that their Orientalist legacy was being unmasked. Said's association of Area

[4] Said clearly linked his critique of Orientalism historically to Area Studies. This incipient link between colonial discourse and Area Studies has been largely ignored in subsequent Postcolonial Studies.

Studies with colonial knowledge (a linkage made as early as 1955 in Schwab's *La Renaissance orientale* for whose English translaton Said wrote an introduction in 1984) should have signalled the occasion to rethink the practice of Area Studies, put it on a less politically mediated basis of knowledge, and free it from its reliance on the Cold War necessities of the national security state. But, this challenge was never accepted by Area Studies specialists. It was not the moment to rise to the challenge posed by *Orientalism* and reassess their disciplinary practices. The stakes were just too high. It would have entailed Area Studies programs acknowledging and coming to terms with their reliance on the necessities of the national security state. Perhaps, the challenge was not accepted because instrumentality had been implanted in such programs *ab initio* (Harootunian 2002: 152–3). Or, perhaps, Area Studies did not question its Orientalist roots because its practitioners, a group of liberal-thinking professors, might have had to question the neocolonialist origins of their jobs or the neocolonialist character of their research, faculty recruitment and funding. It is hard to be alternative or radical when the State Department has funded your entire career and continues to cut your checks.

Area Studies programs, however, did realize that they needed to change. The places, people and pasts to be studied needed to be reconceptualized out of an urgency to acknowledge new post-subjectivities. In response, universities created new models to satisfy changing priorities. They produced new visions of international studies that promised new knowledge required for participation in new globalizing systems of production and consumption. Such new transnational "ethnoscapes" supplanted the threatened traditional Area Studies departments.

Although the critique initiated by Said did not engender any fundamental soul searching in social science methodology beyond the cosmetic,[5] it did find fertile ground in the Humanities, especially English Studies. A site such as India, formerly housed in religion, anthropology, linguistics, and Area Studies conglomerates, would now, thanks to the critique of Orientalism, find a home and theoretical resources in English departments, Ethnic Studies, Women's Studies, Humanities Centers, and Cultural Studies units (Hancock 1998: 374). An important thing to note about these locales is that they did not

[5] One has only to look at religion and anthropology curricula and recent job listings in these fields as well as conference topics.

necessarily demand any site-specific knowledge of languages or historical context. "Doing" India in such a setting often means that one does not need to learn specifics about India at all.

India could emigrate to an English department because, for the greater part of the 1980s and 90s, English Literature departments on many campuses had waged successful battles with other administrative units, especially Comparative Literature, to become the campus experts on theory. Since comparatist and national literature scholars had translated and written primers for recent European theory, all English Departments now had to do was step in and anoint themselves the true scholars of critical thought and commandeer the enrollments that went along with the theory craze. On many campuses, this turf war was brutal, since Comparative Literature and the language departments most affected (French, German, Slavic) did not have the critical mass to fight the hegemonic onslaughts of huge English departments. With the appropriation of theory, numerous English departments chose to supplement their curricula with courses dealing less with literature *per se* and more with issues of identity and its construction (Harootunian 2002: 152–3). As theory emigrated to English departments, so too did all those subfields dealing with identity politics, such as feminist, psychoanalytic, and postcolonial studies. The task of rethinking the mission of regions outside Europe (the Third World) was thus co-opted by English departments and Humanities centers (ib. 167).

We should not lose sight of the fact that this transformation of English Studies into "identity" studies opened the field of possible specializations within a discipline that could no longer place the PhDs it had been producing within the more traditional paradigms of English Literature. Identity Studies, such as postcolonial criticism, were boons to English departments. They not only offered English departments a politically correct identity, but also provided marketable subfields of critical knowledge. In fact, they provided a new field entirely and countless possible openings for any number of job and degree candidates. It is not, therefore, by chance that English Studies remade itself as Identity Studies precisely at the time that its graduate programs were overpopulated with students with diminishing prospects and few viable subjects left for dissertations and few jobs available in canonical fields and authors. By virtually becoming programs in Identity Studies, some English Studies programs acquired tropes and subjects from any number of disciplines and new possible combinations, new dissertation

topics opened up new positions that did not exist before. New subfields, such as Ethnicity Studies, Multiculturalism, Transnationalism, Diasporic Studies, and Postcolonial Studies, sprang up, purporting to cross spatial as well a disciplinary borders.

Just as Area Studies had earlier privileged a given region, postcolonial criticism now valorized the formation of subjectivity and a politics of identity rooted in location. In both Area Studies and postcolonial criticism, the locations under investigation (the Middle East or South Asia) were often not even real entities, but geographical imaginary zones existing only in cartography. Just as English Departments had become the spokespersons of theory and ethnicity, so too they now became the custodians of the world, developing an institution's administrative units on alterity. Theory and the world, once the purview of Comparative Literature departments, were now taught in English Departments often without historical contextualization or any grasp of the source texts. In fact, English Departments were reinventing the wheel. They were uninformed or willfully ignorant of the fact that Comparative Literature programs had for decades been doing the very type of work that they now envisioned as so cutting edge. In their provincialism, worldly English scholars could now claim:

> In a globalized world, it is perhaps time to think in terms of comparative and transnational multiculturalism, of relational studies that do not always pass through the putative order. What are the relationalities between Indian and Egyptian cinema? (Shohat and Stam 2003: 4)

One can only question whether English professors had ever previously pondered what their colleagues in Comparative Literature had been doing for the last thirty years. Those monolinguists in English departments, now bemoaning Eurocentrism, were unaware that comparatists had engaged in such cross-cultural analyses for decades. Forty years ago Etiemble had advised Western comparatists to be conversant in at least one non-Western language and literature. English departments were now congratulating themselves for engaging in the types of inquiry that Comparative Literature had been doing for years without subtitles!

The practicality of English Departments' usurpation of Ethnicity and Postcolonial Studies was that they could in many institutions colonize the now discredited Area Studies programs and the smaller (and, therefore) vulnerable Comparative Literature Programs. By reading the world in translation, English Departments uncovered racist

oppression and, at the same time, waged an effective imperialistic campaign of their own. In fact, one might argue that postcolonial criticism saved English Departments, giving them a new lease on life, marketability for their graduates, and the politically expedient cause of officially combatting imperialist mentalities of the past while waging a disciplinary hegemonic offensive in the present.

The monopolization of Postcolonial Studies by English Studies effected an important change in focus. Postcolonial Studies, of necessity, became more textual, semiotic, and general. Had Postcolonial Studies stayed in the field of Area Studies, it would have emphasized social sciences and political economy, as in the model of the Delhi-based Subaltern Studies Group (Harootunian 2002; 168). Once postcolonial criticism had migrated to English, however, it lost any interest in history it might have had, jettisoning an already modest association with such things as temporality and chronologies. By appealing to culturalism as a putative structuring force, postcolonial criticism led to a supercession of history and an articulation of formalist exceptionalism where history seems to have been completed in archaic times (ib. 153).

In the migration of India as a disciplinary site to the field of English Studies, we find a situation akin to that described by Arjun Appadurai as the aesthetics of decontextualization, where ethnic products become authentic through cultural dislocation. Appadurai cites the study of Third World Literature in English departments as a case in point (Appadurai 1986: 28). Through a process wherein readers sympatheticallly identify with such decontextualised products, cultural ignorance not only results, but is sanctioned. Postcolonial criticism allowed us to accept a politics of ignorance and the perpetuation of ignorance-as-knowledge, especially in our classrooms (Srivastava 1995: 16). This state of affairs describes how India often gets "taught" in the States today.[6]

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[6] During a recent medical leave, my course on Sanskrit Drama was taught by a comparatist trained in Cultural Studies. He assigned a final paper in which student were asked to analyse a Sanskrit play by comparing it to an American film. Since courtesans appear in several ancient Sanskrit plays, I received several papers comparing the 5th century play, Sudraka's *The Little Clay Cart* to Julia Robert's star vehicle, *Pretty Woman*. This example points to a certain dumbing down or refusal/inability to deal with the Other in its historicity and specificity, or only through the optic of how it compares to the Western norm.

II. Postcolonial Theory and Commodity Fetishism

Postcolonial theory provides a test case for Guillory's critique of the institutional levelling out of putatively marginal cultural forms (Guillory 1993: 37–8). Disparate postcolonial texts, collectively studied in English[7] and co-opted for a largely imaginary pedagogic agenda, are deployed as forms of cultural capital in an institutional setting. With postcolonial literature thus grounded, it becomes an oppositional academic discipline as well as an attractive and non-threatening object of consumption.

On the institutional level, postcolonial theory has become a fetishized commodity (Ahmad 1992: 127). This process involves turning literatures/cultures of the non-West into saleable exotic objects, such as multicultural anthologies and highly publicized first novels by young authors who are *de facto* spokespersons for their place of birth (Brennan 1997: 47–8). The fight for spokespersonship can get nasty. Who speaks for the voiceless oppressed Other? The "native" whose education and life experience bespeaks of privilege or liberal self-minoritized Whites who have studied under them? The cosmopolitan alterity industry perfected a rhetoric of fetishized otherness (Huggan 2001: 10), where sympathetic identification masks the transformation of power politics into spectacle (Arac and Ritvo 1991: 3).

Commodifying the Third World serves concrete development needs. Universities have suffered considerable downsizing in recent years. With the loss of public funding, state and private institutions have had to target special interest groups in order to fund new initiatives. Diasporic groups have become increasingly instrumental in such development projects. Indian-Americans who comprise the richest immigrant demographic group in the United States, present tremendous economic potential, as evidenced by recent Indian-based endowments of chairs in major public and private universities. Institutions have become quite adept at catering (some might say, pandering) to such groups. If vested interest groups fund a program, one can be sure that an "official," (i.e. politically acceptable, represen-

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[7] Just as Area Studies had privileged given regions, so now postcolonial criticism could valorize the formation of subjectivity and a politics of identity rooted in location. In both Area Studies and Postcolonial Studies, the locations were not real entities (Middle East, South Asia) but geographical imaginary zones existing only in governmental bureaux and academic institutions.

tation of that nation, people and its cultural products) is promoted. Appeals to cultural nationalism are implicit in institutional development efforts (Grewal 1994). Moreover, since universities are recruiting Indian-American students in ever increasing numbers, it is only logical that they would solicit courses focusing on their communities and concerns. Ideally, these courses would be user-friendly, not demanding any linguistic knowledge or challenging religious or communalist sympathies. Once again, courses that focus on the victimization of a people under colonial rule do not threaten a diaspora community's idealized view of the homeland. Postcolonial theoretical initiatives can thus dovetail very nicely with marketing concerns.

Unlike the native informant of the Area Studies model, the native specialist in today's "marketing of India" is now positioned in the forefront, producing and not just authenticating the discourse on national identity. Trained in Western critical episthemes, indigenous scholars based in the West can provide a discourse on national culture that purports to challenge racialized, gendered and class inequalities written into the structures of knowledge. Unfortunately, the possibility that these visions might just "play back into exclusionary nationalisms" (Hancock 1998: 375) is not questioned. It is ironic that the colonized elite, whose victimization is mourned, but whose collaborative role in colonialism and neocolonialism is never problematized, are the ancestors and brethern of the immigrant population that shoulders the largest tax burden in the United States. We have now arrived at a stage in the emplotment of India, where the Orientalist and Area Studies models have been replaced by what might be termed the "immigrant imaginary" (Rafael 1994: 104) or where teaching becomes an auto-ethnographic exercise (Brennan 1997: 115). It is this "immigrant imaginary" that fuels postcolonial criticism and finances an idealized portrayal for a wealthy and powerful diasporic community.

As we have noted, identity studies, among which we place postcolonial criticism, does not tend to question how well the construction of the text as a network of hegemonic or subversive gestures suits the state of literary theoretical professionalization. Moreover, it does not tend to examine the manner in which the critic's self-fashioning through imaginary marginalization results primarily in the wide-ranging identification of an academic privileged class with the marginalized other. The historically oppressed have become the new role models for the critic, giving political authority to the search for

cultural difference. In a quasimessianic manner, the postcolonial critic positions her/himself to speak for the oftimes neo-colonized Other. The critic can claim to talk for the margin and, in doing so, pretend to speak from the margin, while actually inhabiting a space that is quite close to the center.

Homi Bhabha's earnest attempt to recast theory as a "politics of the theoretical statement" (1994: 22) exemplifies this casting of the critic as a fellow traveler alongside the disenfranchised, as he argues for a reconsideration of Lenin's famous question in poststructuralist terms:

> 'What is to be done?' must acknowledge the force of writing, its metaphoricity and its rhetorical discourse, as a productive matrix which defines the 'social' and makes it available as an objective of and for, action. Textuality is not simply a second-order ideological subject... A knowledge can only become political through an agnostic process: dissensus, alterity and otherness are the discursive conditions for the circulation and recognition of a politicized subject and a public 'truth'. (Bhabha 1994: 23)

This passage from Bhabha's oft-cited essay "The Commitment to Theory" is symptomatic of the problem I have been outlining in at least two ways. First, the critic's placement of the words 'social' and 'truth' within quotation marks effectively reduces the real world struggles of the disenfranchised to a discursive problem. In his deft deconstruction of a politics/theory opposition that would privilege praxis, the critic necessarily ends up valorizing what he does — write, theorize — without requiring any further commitment from him. Theory is a form of praxis, Bhabha wants to argue — I'm already doing my bit. This line of argumentation leads to the conclusion — my second point — that the critic is in fact already aligned with the disenfranchised. Through his claim of the solidarity of theory with the politics of change, Bhabha can implicitly identify himself with the disenfranchised, or at least what he terms in the essay's conclusion a "free people of the future" (Bhabha 1994: 38), even as the actual struggles of people all but disappear in his analysis. In one of its most disturbing moments, the essay in fact reduces these individuals to discursive figures:

> [Theory] makes us aware that our political referents and priorities — the people, the community, class, struggle, antiracism, gender difference, the assertion of an anti-imperialist, black or third perspective — are not there in some primordial, naturalistic sense. Nor do they reflect a unitary or homogeneous object. *They make sense as they come to be constructed* in the discourses of feminism or Marxism or the Third Cinema or whatever, whose objects of priority — class or sexuality or 'the new ethnicity' — are always in historical or philosophical tension, or cross-reference with other objectives. (Bhabha 1994: 26, emphasis added)

Here, the critic's self-aggrandizing agenda becomes crystal clear. Theory is not only an indispensable part of the struggle. Bhabha essentially is claiming to produce the struggle and, along with it, the very people with whom he simultaneously (and cynically) claims solidarity. Thus Bhabha's "Commitment to Theory" allows the critic to have it both ways: It would pre-empt any critique of how the text's appearance as a network of hegemonic or subversive gestures undermines the political causes it claims to champion in favor of literary professionalism, while allowing the critic, simultaneously to pose as a champion of the people "committed to progressive political change in the direction of a socialist society" (Bhabha 1994b: 21). Any question of real powerlessness or marginalization — such as that of the efficacy of theory to effect change — disappears, to be replaced by a posture of powerlessness steeped in a discourse of hybridity, indeterminacy of the signifier, and so on. Theory thus validates the theorist's social pose even as it absolves him of making any real difference.

This masquerade poses a significant problem of representation. By drawing on the experiences of displacement and desire for home as part of the diasporic experience, postcolonial criticism uses these experiences to deconstruct a de-territorialized identity politics. Postcolonial texts abound with examples of this kind of theoretical legerdemain and its corresponding dearth of cultural specificity: Said's sweeping of the entire Western civilization in *Orientalism*; Bhabha's dizzying (and never fully worked through) invocation of Salmon Rushdie, Franz Fanon, Goethe, two Latino performance

artists,[8] and Toni Morrison's *Beloved* in the introduction to *The Location of Culture*; and most recently Spivak's facile juxtaposition of W. E. Dubois and José Martí in the long parenthesis that concludes *Death of a Discipline* (2003).[9]

Postcolonial criticism must reflect postmodernism's concern with hybridity and sites of ambivalence because theoretical notions of the margin, periphery, and exilic space allow critics to create a metaphorical space in which to dwell that is separate from the real space they inhabit. In this metaphorical space, critics can voice ideologies of subversion and rebellion that would be too unsettling, if voiced from their own actual space. The critics' delicate balancing acts stem from the paradox of inhabiting a space of bourgeois comfort, while needing at the same time to distance themselves from global capitalism. When critics appropriate the metaphorical space of the postcolonial, nomad, exile, and marginal, they hope to exonerate themselves for all the benefits they receive from this same capitalism. Criticism thus functions as an act of penance or, to give it a clinical diagnosis, criticism becomes an expression of false consciousness, that reified perception with identificatory, antidialectical, and egocentric structures exposed thiry years ago by existential psychoanalysis (Gabel 1975: 253ff).

III. False Consciousness

In a seminal work in the field of social psychology, Joseph Gabel defined false consciousness as a dissociation produced by a reification of the past. False consciousness is primarily a distortion of the perception and experience of time. When the natural flow of time is "dissociated" by ideology, utopianism or schizophrenia, it produces a perception that is out of touch with reality and at odds with historical fact; it becomes false consciousness (Gabel 1975: xiv). Existential psychoanalysis views the constructions of reality by ideologues, schizophrenics and utopian idealists as being similar. They are all seen to seek

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[8] Guillermo Gomez-Pena and Papon Osorio.

[9] See respectively Said 1978: 1–28; Bhabha 1994: 6–18; and Spivak 2003: 92–97.

reification of their historical existence and understanding of their visions as an organized system of meaning produced to balance and disguise the disorder of their being-in-the-world (ib. 22). In post-colonial criticism, an analogous process is at work. The emphasis on the self overshadows the testimony of native voices. Multitudinous cultures are thus marked and marketed with their chronologies collapsed, particulars essentialized, and geopolitical distinctions telescoped into invisibility. Indiscriminately embracing the other levels out the various competing others. They tend to look the same, since their actuality is never taken seriously.

Homi Bhabha's invocation of both Beloved and the plight of border crossing Mexican immigrants in the introduction to *The Location of Culture*, for example, functions in precisely this way, by invoking the struggles of African-American slaves and Latino communities only as a point of departure for his own discursive analysis of hybridity and the transposibility of cultural positions (Bhabha 1994: 6–18). Bhabha's by-now notorious refrain, "Who is Beloved?" (1994: 18) emerges in this context as disingenuous and even cynical, given that the novel's very obvious positioning of Beloved herself — arguably among the most poignant characters in all of American literature — is reduced in Bhabha's analysis to a rhetorical figure in a broader analysis that ultimately confirms the critic's place as an arbiter of culture and spokesman for the other.

Spivak's translations of Mahasweta Devi's fiction and her writing on the practice of **sati** in India, while more subtle and self-reflexive in their maneuverings, function in much the same way. Spivak in less interested in the stories themselves, which focus on the plight of the *devadasis,* than on how they serve as examples of her own theory of subalterneity, as best explained in her well-known essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?" (1998).[10] Spivak downplays the horrors perpetrated upon the protagonist of Devi's "Breast-Giver," for example, in favor of the broader argument about the incommensurability of subalternity and representation (Spivak 1988b: 222–40, 241–68). Likewise, Spivak's discussions of the case of the widowed Rani of Sirmur and the politically-motivated suicide of a young militant Indian woman finally shift away from the individuals' respective predicaments and toward

[10] For the most recent, revised version of this oft-cited essay, see Spivak 1999: 248–311. For the original, see Spivak 1988.

presenting them as examples of an "unemphatic, ad hoc, subaltern rewriting of the social text of **sati**-suicide" (Spivak 1999: 307). Spivak goes on to further contextualize the women's struggles within an abstracted theoretical framework, concluding ambivalently that "[t]he subaltern as female, cannot be heard or read... Bhubaneswari attempted to 'speak' by turning her body into a text or woman/ writing" and that "her attempt had failed" because later generations of women in her own family failed to "hear" her correctly (Spivak 1985: 308). In each of these examples, the native voice of the subaltern is sublated and folded into the critic's larger theoretical imperatives, first among which is the positioning of the critic in an imaginary solidarity with the marginalized Other who cannot speak. The native voice becomes mere fodder for the critic's performance of a virtuous marginality. Absent, of course, from this discussion is the fact that any archival investigation of native and colonial records show ample evidence of subaltern women "speaking" for themselves.[11]

The problem with this postcolonial formulation becomes clear, as San Juan suggests, "when contraposed to the resistance of colonized subalterns themselves" (San Juan 1998: 8). The truly marginalized are not there by choice; they do not, as does the postcolonial critic, position themselves on the perceived margin the better to produce elaborate academic critiques of Western hegemony. The result, as San Juan explains, is a theory "divorced from its concrete social determinations" (San Juan 1998: 9). If for Bhabha, Said, et al. the margin is a desirable place from which to exploit the "unevenness" of colonial discourses, for Arif Dirlik such a posture of self-marginalization emphasizes cultural difference and linguistic indeterminacy (the critic's strengths) at the expense of a more substantial critique of Western hegemony:

> However much postcolonial intellectuals may insist on hybridity and the transposability of locations, not all positions are equal in power, as Spivak's interrogators in India seem to recognize in their reference to the "wings of progress" that brought her to India. To insist on hybridity against one's own language, it seems to me, is to disguise not only ideological location but also the differences of power that go with different locations. (Dirlik 1994: 343)

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[11] See Waters 1997.

Dirlik's critique, echoing San Juan's, effectively gives the lie to post-colonial formulations of Foucault's theory of marginality by exposing the irreducible difference between the critic and the subaltern group. The critic may conspicuously position herself at the margin, but she retains a mobility (social and literal) that the truly disenfranchised can only dream of. As Michael Gorra points out in a different context, the fluidity and hybridity that postcolonialism so prizes "remain best suited for those most able to live with a sense of uncertainty and improvisation — for the gifted and well-off, those for whom shuttling between London and Bombay is the literal and not the figurative truth" (Gorra: 1997: 172).[12]

What I propose instead is that we reject a postcolonial theory that, as practiced by its most eminent stars, glorifies legerdemain and/ linguistic pyrotechnics at the expense of the careful study of languages, literatures, and cultures — precisely those skills and habits that, ironically enough, Spivak herself praises throughout her most recent book as the traditional strengths of Comparative Literature. If the rise of postcolonial studies poses any real threat to Comparative Literature as a discipline, it is because of the apparent ease with which an initiate can become an expert. Because postcolonial theory does not require comparative literature's linguistic skills or an expert's familiarity with specific national cultures and histories, it allows for (and even encourages) a theoretical approach that conflates individual colonial histories and contexts into an overarching "condition." Hence postcolonialism's false consciousness: postcolonial studies emerges as a faux-discipline whose practitioners can celebrate cultural difference and hybridity, and speak in solidarity with subalterns without ever having to partake of their actual struggles.

What born-again comparatist Spivak calls for in *The Death of a Discipline* — a "reconstellation" of the discipline that retains its traditional strengths while embracing a suspiciously postcolonial-sounding "planetarity" (Spivak 2003: 91) — again promises to do everything, in the manner of a demonstrably overinflated post-coloniality: preserve traditional strengths while opening up to cultural and linguistic differences within national literatures and retain and defend the value of language skills. True to the postcolonial approach

[12] In the quoted passage, Gorra's immediate subject is Rushdie's fiction and characters.

I have mapped out, Spivak asserts all of this but offers only an anecdotal willfully eclectic exposition of what such a comparative literature might look like, how it might operate in a world increasingly dominated by facile monolingual postcolonial and cultural studies. Rather than a prescription or manifesto, Spivak presents the book as a call to action "in the hope that there may be some in the academy who do not believe that the critical edge of the humanities should be appropriated and determined by the market" (Spivak 2003:xii). This approach is of course consistent with the postcolonial critic's pretense of "openness" toward the future as Spivak herself asserts: "we must, as literature teachers in the classroom ... let literature teach us that there are no certainties, that the process is open, and that it may be salubrious that it is so" (Spivak 2003: 26).

Perhaps. But then again, plus ca change, plus c'est la meme chose. Spivak's strategy exemplifies the dishonesty pervading much post-colonial theory. It espouses an open-endedness in order to occlude a concerted lack of cultural knowledge, specificity, and ultimately, respect for the cultures supposedly being studied. Such lofty dis-interest allows Spivak in a final, unfortunate parenthesis at the end of *Death of a Discipline* to blithly throw together figures as disparate as José Martí and W.E.B. DuBois for no better reason than that they represent "two widely known, heroic figures from the older minorities, writers of a previous dispensation" (Spivak 2003: 92). She can invoke the two great modernists not to carefully discuss their works, but to employ them in her own critical project of "the turning of identitarian monuments into documents for reconstellation" (Spivak 2003: 91). It is a profoundly disappointing, yet not surprising con-clusion for the book. It points in a discouraging way to how one of our discipline's most renowned professors practices her craft. Martí and DuBois do not need to be "reconstellated", but Spivak's version of Comparative Literature does.

Postcolonial criticism has, in fact, died. It died before we could even articulate adequately what it was. It is time for critics to retool themselves. What better persona to adopt, in the age of multicultu-ralism and globalism, than that of a comparatist. Postcolonial critics whose formation almost exclusively had been in English literature made their careers championing a brand of criticism that claimed to engage a voiceless, under-represented world. They did so while ignoring the methodology and linguistic expertise traditional to the

discipline of Comparative Literature. They now position themselves as prophets calling for a return to the very skills that their own scholarship has consistently eschewed. They claim to engage in a reform process of installing the standards of cultural and linguistic specificity to a discipline that their own brand of criticism had co-opted and colonized. They claim to discover what comparatists have known and practiced for decades, with the telling difference that the focus continues to be on the consciousness of the critic herself rather than the culture supposedly under investigation. This too is an extension of the false consciousness that plagues scholars today.

IV. Commodity Fetishism and Brahminization

The institutionalization of postcolonialism described above exhibits a process of commodity fetishism, or the veiling of the material circumstances under which a commodity is produced and consumed. Commodity fetishism has three components. It involves a mystification or levelling out of historical experience. It also exhibits an imagined access to the cultural other and entails the reification of people and places into aesthetic objects. Postcolonial criticism fits these criteria. It presents the historical past often more informed by ideology than by historical and linguistic facts. This distorted vision of the past, dissociated from reality, is further circumscribed by the critic's strategies of self-representation. By reifying the history of colonialism, making it the sole source of all socio-cultural evils, postcolonial critics foreclose the possibility of interrogating and transcending the endemic social and cultural dysfunction that predates colonialism and lives on after the colonial masters have left. In this respect, postcolonial critics not only exhibit a false consciousness. Through a process of brahminization, they reify their own position within both their professional and ethnic communities.

The term "brahminization" was first introduced by the anthopologist M. N. Srinivas in the 1950s [13] to describe the process whereby a

[13] In *Religion and Society Among the Coorgs of South India*, Srinivas defined Sanskritization as follows: "A low caste was able in a generation or two to rise to a higher position in the hierarchy by adopting vegetarianism and teetotalism, by

group attempts to acquire the traditional symbols of high status (customs, rituals, and lifestyle) of the local highest elite (Srinivas 1966: 28).[14] Brahminization denotes the social and ritual emulation of brahmins (Srinivas 1956: 482–84). In Hindu society, brahmins are the original culture brokers, who control scripture and materially profit from its manipulation and dissemination. The term "brahminization" well suits our argument, since brahmins as traditional custodians of Hindu scriptures, are the archetypal ideal readers and authoritative critics (Figueira 2002). Postcolonial critics, who appropriate the voice of the colonized subject and become professional spokespersons for alterity, "brahminize" themselves by claiming the power to disseminate images of the national culture and its internal others, documenting, and managing the Other through an objectifying discourse. In the process, they produce what Bourdieu has termed cultural capital. The literary field becomes the site of struggle. What is at stake is the power to impose a dominant definition of the writer and thereby delimit the population of those authorized to call themselves writers (Bourdieu 1993: 42). Critics assume the task of consecrating both the producers and their products, whether these take the form of prefaces for volumes, reviews of scholarship or editing textbooks. This process is essentially the hermeneutic task of the brahmin with regard to scripture. Servility (mimicry), revealed as a sly form of resistance, is less a marker of colonialism than a nostalgic yearning for caste order.

Like the native informant of anthropology, postcolonial critics use their own experience to package a structure concerning India that reflects values and intellectual paradigms esteemed in the West. In this effort, they exercise power by delimiting a vision of the nation that suits ideological and political concerns of the diaspora community. They see themselves as both creators and products of national identity. They become, in effect, as much culture brokers as any

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Sanskritizing its ritual and pantheon, took over as far a possible the customs, rites and beliefs of the Brahmins" (1952: 0).

[14] In early formulations of his theory, Srinivas used the term "Sanskritization." Although Srinivas admitted that the term "brahminization" more accurately described the process of emulating the highest group (Srinivas 1956), the term "Sanskritization" is more commonly used by anthropologists. As my argument deals directly with issues of textuality, I have chosen to adopt the term "brahminization," to reflect the critic's position as the custodian of texts.

Orientalist or Area-Studies specialist of the Third World. Rather than serving colonial projects, Indian nationalist, or Cold War liberal agendas, they act as gate keepers of an Indian immigrant imaginary. Like the anthropologist, they serve the interests of upper caste Indians and offer authoritative versions of history that reflect the politics of their time. Postcolonial critics serve a constituency within the diaspora community that funds their jobs in the West, as well as nationalist and fundamentalist projects in India. By emulating the values and prerogatives of the Western academic secular elite, indigenous postcolonial critics construct a product to be consumed by the West for bureaucratic ends and global marketing needs. They establish a pedagogy based on the moral presumption of the individual teacher as the self-appointed custodian and transmitter of a text's allegedly oppositional values. Such "brahmanical" teachers arrogate authority that derives from their experience of these cultures and thus reconfirms the otherness of place from which they and the texts they study are perceived to spring (Huggan 2001: 246). Students do not question the authority attributed to these "brahmins" as postcolonial theorists in Western institutional settings any more than believers question their priests. As every good Buddhist knows, brahminization, whether it be in theory or practice, does not necessarily lead to enlightenment.

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Looking for Trouble in Theory

ISMAIL EL-OUTMANI

My aim in this paper, which will be very general, is to reflect, from a non-Western perspective, on some of the problems or questions attached to the use of key concepts such as Discourse, Theory, Canon, and Ideology in the study/ teaching of (comparative) literature.

Today, the word "discourse" is common currency in various disciplines (linguistics, literary and cultural criticism, philosophy, history, literary and cultural criticism, philosophy, history, etc); yet, the fact is that its frequent use does not entail the existence of an accurate definition of "discourse". Left unexamined, "discourse" is at best polyvalent, at worst misleading. One practical way of calling it to order is by some pronouncement about its intimate relation to History and Ideology, the context within which "discourse" (henceforth Discourse) has a meaningful existence.

Discourse as a critical notion has been deconstructed and redefined as the traditional definition introduced by, particularly, linguists no longer conveyed the deep(-ening) and broad(-ening) meaning of Discourse. Discourse, in fact, is neither Saussurean (only), nor a monopoly of linguistics any more. The term has developed into something more than just "language as an abstract system". Mikhail Bakhtin, Michel Foucault, Edward Said, and Jacques Derrida are some of the (eminent) scholars who sought to provide Discourse with a new nomenclatural status. Discourse to them refers to what is said, but also to what is unsaid, whether verbally or non verbally (image, icon, sign, symbol, picture, etc). More importantly, Discourse in their view embodies or entails Authority and/or Ideology.

Foucault and Derrida aimed to challenge the predominant cultural definitions and codes governing Discourse, the former urged by his refusal of State institutions and the official discourse sustaining them,

the latter by his obsession against Western metaphysics and the logocentrism of Western culture. Both scholars indulged in a redefinition campaign, so to speak, based on anti-referentiality, which produced a disorientating and allusive critique. According to Foucault, Discourse in its textual form always conceals a second discourse which cannot be perceived, unless we regard the text to be part of a network of Power. Power, he argues, knowingly hides discursively beneath text and knowledge. Derrida for his part adopts an ahistorical vocabulary to describe this "simulation" of Discourse: "dissémination", "trace", "pharmakos", "aporia", "abyme", "agon", "différance", "marque" are examples of Derrida's critical vocabulary in this regard, a vocabulary Said rightly termed "negative theology". Derrida, the deconstructionist par excellence, puts forth Deconstruction as a symptom of the break-up of the metaphysical foundation of Western culture by tempting a postmodernization of life as apocalypse.

Like Foucault, Edward Said relates Discourse to Power, but, unlike Foucault and Derrida, he assumes a historicist position, engendered by his status of an exile in the West. For Said, Discourse is inevitably linked to institutions, disciplines and intellectuals, which implies that the study of Discourse must involve (the study of) Power. Discourse is not only about meaning and method, but more importantly, about function, which scholars should attempt to describe or define.

A different approach to Discourse is promoted by scholars with a formation in the linguistic field. They usually focus on the systematic analysis of the syntactic, semantic, stylistic, narrative rhetorical, or pragmatic structures and strategies of text and talk as used by politicians, journalists, judges, teachers, etc., and in situations as varied as textbooks, or medical certificates, to identify cases of racism, discrimination, sexism, prejudice, nationalism, and so forth. Teun A. van Dijk, an eminent representative of this school, regards Discourse as a communicative event. Probably, the main flaw of this pragmatic approach to Discourse (as language in use) lies in the fact that it excludes those criteria that are not of a descriptive nature.

Discourse conveys an attitude vis-à-vis the world, and there is no such thing as disinterested discourse. Therefore, the audience has the right to be especially suspicious of the pursuit of knowledge as the driving principle of his/her discursive activity. In any case, the study of Discourse cannot preoccupy itself with texts alone, nor only with their genesis or social context. At the basis of every discourse lies a

consciousness. Discourse is social, and intellectual discourse is about a social experience. Hence art, for example, cannot be more important or above people, just as the artists — be they poets, novelists, painters, playwrights, or sculptors — cannot ignore their audiences. Consciousness constitutes the "I", which is the sum of one's social background, education, and vital experience.

In the realm of literature, some texts are more literary than others partly because a text conceived by its author as literary may end up being read as an historical document or a scientific textbook. Yet, despite any normative and aesthetic differences variations, all literary texts respond to a constituted consciousness; that is, the ideologically signifying practices which the authors perform to secure, strengthen, or transform the predominant discourse. It goes without saying that the ambiguous normative system governing the establishment of the literary Canon functions precisely according to an order of dominance that is established, not to say imposed, by scholars and institutions serving the hegemonic culture.

Teaching literature involves deciding what works to study, in what context(s) to study them, and why. This means that literature cannot, and does not, teach itself. Literary education is therefore not conceived as a discipline that by itself familiarizes the student with a certain number of authors, historical periods, and representative works of literature. Instead, literature is taught by teachers, who by no means constitute a homogeneous group, because they differ essentially about the tacitly shared theories of literature and teaching. So, ideally students need to be given a clear idea about the theoretical ideas that determine the teacher's, or the department's, choice of the texts and, eventually, teaching method(s). It is ideas that constitute Canon formation and literary Theory; ideas that provide criteria and give value to the study of literature. Yet literary studies, namely in higher education, are probably a question more of the signifier than of the signified.

In other words, although the student is on principle free to think what he/she wants about an author or a literary work, his/her essay should ultimately conform to the (teacher's) pre-set method and value system if he/she expects to be examined and certificated. This implies that, on the whole, students are taught one discourse with one set of canonical works analysed from one concrete angle not because the critical literary discourse has a definite signified (though it embodies assumptions), but because teachers are very often custodians of a

discourse purveyed by authorities of a social, cultural or political nature. Organizing a reading list and regulating the criteria for the critical judgment is part of the idea of cultural structures which embody and sustain the Power relationship embedded both in the consciousness of teachers, or academics, and the cultural institutions they represent.

The Canon controversy will never go away. Meanwhile, the academic community, for the sake of rehumanizing — anew, but more democratically, or less rigidly — the study of literature, must strive to extend the reading list as well as the range of texts. In Morocco, and former colonies in general, teachers in the various literature departments have, more often than not, been eager to program for their students the (study of) "great literature" which ennobles and civilizes. In doing so, they have been promoting a concrete agenda of choices which has been relatively arbitrarily arranged, and whose configuration is far from being "politically correct".

Although it is written in language, literature cannot be analysed like other sets of language, because it involves a non-"mechanistic" dimension as well, whereby the author's political unconscious happens to be at work. Let there be no doubts: Moroccan university students are still awaiting to see curricula and syllabi which spring from the national soil, promoting ethical and social values of their own, and a discourse that takes pride in challenging or refuting the neocolonial discourse. Moroccan academics cannot/must not continue submitting their choices to the imperialistic desire in the name of (what is) a false cultural hybridity, which amounts in practice to the banalization of one's history and culture. Real dialogical hybridity, as an anti-essentialist phenomenon, presupposes a democratically constructed dialogue between two equally valid cultures.

The ideal for every literature department in former colonies like Morocco would be that selecting and teaching texts take place within a dialogic atmosphere involving the two main players, the teachers on one hand and the students on the other. Perhaps I need to point out in the present context that the academic community should stop thinking that their inaccessibility, from the student's point of view, is a mark of excellence, because it simply is not. Teachers must liberate themselves from an image the perception of whose severity has for long made the Moroccan university students feel constantly terrified and insecure. Would inclusiveness of the students and junior researchers

not give strength to the study of literature, and the Humanities in general?

Literature departments in Morocco, and the Third World countries in general, are infested with so-called classical authors and canonical texts (e.g. Chaucer, Milton, Shakespeare, Donne, Conrad, Austen, Eliot, and Woolf in the case of English literature) of which we have no interpretation of our own. It seems that Moroccan academics are a priori happy to consume what First World critics and Canon-makers have thought (ideas!) suitable for their own English department(s). And what suits them must suit us, seems to be the Moroccan's motto vis-à-vis the former's discourse. Of course, I am not calling for the current programs and syllabi to be rendered obsolete, but to question their contents and, ideally, reshape them according to Moroccan cultural and ethical values, political and economic interests, and ideological point of view.

Take the example of *Don Quixote*. If Cervantes's pioneering novel inspires a concrete canonical reading in Spain, and by extension in the West, Moroccan scholars must be able to produce an alternative interpretation of *Don Quixote*, whereby their being muslims is relevant given Cervantes's manifest textual, as well as metatextual, caricaturesque treatment of Islam and muslims. Such awareness would enable Moroccan teachers, students, and critics to offer appropriate resistance to the West's absolutism and monocentrism. The West's self-interest and discriminating mind would eventually be de-concealed and its discourse remodelled or revisited.

My text as discourse has (hitherto) been Ideology-bound, despite the fact that I have not claimed to look at the things from a specific perspective, ideologically speaking. Ideology is a complex notion to define. But in fairly simple terms, Ideology is a framework of thought or belief, a view of the world that guides or typifies the action of an individual or a group. The relationship between Ideology and literature depends on a rather simple model: the reader judges the text, which normally normally harbours the author's ideology, which *grosso modo* either confirms or clashes with the beliefs or convictions held by the reader-interpreter.

Literary texts need not be necessarily "historical", "social" or "realistic" for Ideology to be accepted as the horizon of reading and interpreting them. All readings and all interpretations are always already ideologized. Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, for instance, is reckoned

to have Buchanan's *History of Scotland* as one of its sources. Moreover, the play is customarily associated with the "natural" opposition between good and evil, involving witches and divine ordination. That is no doubt a conservative interpretation of the text compared to that of progressive scholars, who regard *Macbeth* to be a play about the conflict between tyrannical monarchs and oppressed peoples. Orwell's *Animal Farm* is for the Formalist readers not an allegory of Stalinism, but an allegory for the construction of which Stalinism provide the useful opportunity. Content as the motivation of form is not what guides critics with a different ideological background than the Formalists'.

I agree, men of letters, and scholars in general, can have little influence over State tyranny, the therapeutic power of their discourse being very limited. Nevertheless, literature does in my opinion contribute to the formation of opinion and the legitimization of Discourse. Yet, I would not go so far as Terry Eagleton to claim that theoretical enquiry, or critical analysis, is fruitless unless it leads to practical consequences, in the Marxist sense of affecting, materially, the dominant social relations of production of a society. I am quite happy to note that both *Macbeth* and *Animal Farm* expose, instead of, for example, promoting State ideology, without losing any of their aesthetic value as artistic texts.

I share Said's idea that criticism within, as well as outside, literary studies has to be oppositional, in the sense that critics cannot assume that their concern is merely the text, thus neglecting the relation between textuality and context; that is, between Discourse and Ideology. It is essential in Said's view that the historical dimension be intrinsically connected with the critic's analysis and interpretations of Discourse. What I find difficult to accept in Said's approach, however, is his unoppositional stance vis-à-vis canonical and "great" works of literature. The Palestinian scholar surprisingly celebrates canonical literature in an unreconstructive manner, because although he is theoretically for the reinterpretation of the literary "classics", he is actually unenthusiastic about their eventual decanonization.

The word "Canon" refers to a corpus of texts which are traditionally deemed "great", ""valuable", "universal" and timeless, and therefore worthy of continued academic study. Canon formation is closely related to the ways in which society has regulated the social practices of reading and writing. Since school, in the broad sense of

the word, is a social institution responsible for disseminating literacy and knowledge, Canon formation cannot be isolated from the domain of ideology. The selection of certain texts and the claims of "greatness" then attributed to them for every time and place lead to their canonization, which in practical terms results in an undemocratic exercise of power by those official institutions responsible for distributing knowledge. It is time, I believe, to re-examine the grounds upon which certain literary "classics" have been deemed "great".

Pedagogically and ideologically speaking, I am inclined to think that canon should have a "national" character, in the sense that each country should be able to produce its own syllabus by producing its own reading and judgment of literary works. Those academics who believe in this project of cultural nationalization as described here must endeavor to read and interpret, e.g., English literature, to select and canonize for the students according to their (Moroccan! Third World! Post-colonial!) criteria of truth and beauty. Ideally, Canon must be for a society/ country a self-created and humane "thing" inspired truth, and rationality.

The modernization of a country starts with the nationalization of its people's citizenship. Claiming the right to teach themselves how to read is a fundamental step towards the nationalization of the Moroccan people's citizenship, which is constantly threatened by Western acculturalization. Non-First-World countries like Morocco must feel free to both canonize previously marginalized or subversive works and decanonize long canonized works. This project requires primarily that Third-World academics and critics, including the Moroccans, emancipated their rhetoric and scrutinize the structures of authority sustaining the academic landscape.The dominant ideology behind the actual make-up of the Canon and the value system regulating it is clearly Western.

By re-examining the canonical works in their literature departments, the Moroccan/Third-World academics will be challenging the Western Canon, and by implication the powerful Western discourse. This should not be seen as an attempt to refuse mastery, because the real goal here is to dethrone those canonized masters whose works foster oppression and imperialism. Said's *Orientalism* and *Culture and Imperialism* offer useful guidance, once we decide to revisit Western art and literature, especially those works that were "inspired" by the Orient and the Third World in general. Or should Morocco as a

people and a civilization, and the Muslim Orient, continue to be apologetic for, or even proud of, the likes of Delacroix, Gerôme, Reganult, P. Bowles, E. M. Forester, J. Austen, J. Conrad, A. Camus, A. Gide, and G. Verdi?

My generation was undoubtedly taught to dislike Arabic language and literature. The archaic, and at times sadistic, teaching method based on memorizing without comprehending, on unaware of the fascinating power of Arabic as a language, of the aesthetic and the richness of our intellectual, scientific, and philosophical legacy, and, more importantly, unwary of the historical and social roles Arabic has had to play for being the tongue of the Islamic civilization and the supreme symbol of the Muslim's faith. The French, the Spanish and the English have in the meantime been working hard in order to "preach" their language and culture in Morocco, using strategies that catch the average student's eye, and heart, because of their apparent generosity, and above all, air of inclusiveness.

The rise of a national literary Canon will probably generate a healthy situation of multilingualim. Writers in a former colonial situation — who face the choice of writing in Arabic, which will reach a comparatively small audience, or in the former colonial language (French, Spanish), which will reach a much larger audience — must, for the time being, not be judged by the Canon-makers (who should master other languages besides Arabic) on their linguistic choice, despite the immediate connotations thereof, but on the contents of their works. At any rate, the theoretical basis of our literary canon must aspire to be rigorously scientific and critical, taking into account the "humanistic" character of the works under scrutiny.

I admit that I have somewhat simplified what is a complex issue. In any case, decanonization and recanonization are in my view an essential part of the process of decolonization. The Western conception of Canon, Humanities, and Human civilization has contributed to the subordination of he Third World peoples. Under these circumstances, the nationalization of culture, of school, university, library, and media, however difficult and idealistic this may look, is actually the first step towards liberation, which includes the liberation produced by the aesthetic, provided it is not conceived in terms of disinterested and timeless contemplation. By creating world-mappings of their own, Third World peoples will be able, slowly but surely, to replace the

mappings designed and promoted by the colonizing power, with the help of local reactionary forces.

The task is huge, by which I mean that it is not enough that advocates — from the Third World in particular — of recanonization write or talk about theory or ideology, which is safer and less uncomfortable than analyzing and "making visible" the hidden discourse of the educational and cultural institutions. The changes that need to be made in the Moroccan syllabus (and teaching system as a whole) cannot take place at the hands of Destiny or in a vacuum; nor should they consist in shifting the weight of the syllabus from older works to modern ones. Changing the students' reception of canonical works by, say, Cervantes or Baudelaire, Dante or Shakespeare, Milton or Al-Mutanabbi — whose value is transitive, for there is no literary work which is valuable in itself — requires that teachers change their minds, which needs time. But when that happens, it will influence dramatically the students' way of looking at the world, past and present.

Teaching is not about transmitting ready-made knowledge as much as it is about creating a new condition of knowledge, that is, an original learning position. Helping the students to learn, mediating between the texts and the students, which is what teaching should be about, with books that inspire cultural plurality, racial equality, and dignified aesthetics will make them (the students) aware of themselves as holding a hysterically shaped perspective that affects, in one way or another, the Human discourse.

Perhaps one of the practical strategies for the present purpose would be to encourage the teaching and study of Comparative Literature. This discipline, as I understand it, must be, if not interdisciplinary, at least interdepartmental. That implies that comparatists would have to master at least two languages, and show real and active interest in the literatures of the other departments. Its is high time the Moroccan university had a department dedicated to Comparative Literature. Meanwhile, the staff teaching literature and making syllabi should start reflecting on introducing texts which have traditionally been "alien", both linguistically and culturally, to one's department.

In other words, English students reading Milton, Eliot, or Woolf must be encouraged to read, for instance, classical Arab authors like Al-Maarri and Al-Bàrudi; and those Arabic students reading Al-Hamadhani or Shawqi should be given the opportunity to read, also,

some texts by, for example, Chaucer or Rimbaud; and so on and so forth. Besides paving the way for Comparative Literature, this "naïve" approach could also engender enthusiasm for the acquisition of language proficiency in various tongues. In sum, it is important that teachers keep a healthy attitude of self-criticism on one hand, and of openness vis-à-vis the other departments (as embodiments of a given literature) on the other. In doing so, they will probably communicate more fluently and efficiently among themselves, whilst sharing the same meeting-ground will help them evolve and respond better to challenges from inside and outside their field and country.

Morocco and the rest of the Third-World countries are also required to work towards "exporting" literature to the First World as a contribution to a true Comparative Literature; one that abandons its traditional Euro-centrism to turn global as a reflection of contemporary cultural realities. It seems that most of the very limited number of texts ever translated and marketed in/for the First World are mediated by establishments or institutions linked ideologically to the First World and its strategic interests. It is therefore not unusual that those translated texts (novels mainly) that are read in the First World are handpicked as the allegorical representation, "a mere picture-image", to quote Coleridge, of the authors' respected countries, which in turn explains that First World critics overestimate their knowledge of a Third-World country's literature (fiction) while underestimating the real literary range of its authors.

In society, human beings live, act, and converse with the help of language. Language in Bakhtinian terms is essentially dialogic. That is, the word is not regarded as a two-sided sign: signifier and signified, as in Saussure, but a two-sided act. Intellectuals with a literary/humanistic background indulge in "philosophical" discursive acts; some of them may even formulate theories about the world. The nihilistic radicality of structuralists like Barthes and the radical nihilism of poststructuralist such as Derrida call for Humanism to be dismantled, urging (us) to think through the "end of man".

Those of us who believe in the human engagement embedded in and embodied by the Humanities as discourse must guard against the destructive and misleading deconstructive discourse promoted by Derrida and his fellow postmodernists. The alternative critical procedure is that which regards the humanistic discourse, and literature in particular, to be composed by human beings for human beings, and

about human beings and human concerns. This must be the strength of the humanistic criticism in the face of the sustained onslaught by the anti-humanist lobby, which tries to invert the "humane" charge of the notions "human" and "humanism" to negative conceptions by passing discursively beyond man and humanism.

It is quite legitimate that there be a variety of critical literary theories: one is bold, the other instructive, the third provocative, and a disturbing fourth. But the practices of any theory must, to my mind, be guided towards uncovering the human being's possible in-consistencies and pointing out his/her insufficiencies, without being critically intolerant or inappropriately dogmatic, given the figurative dimension of the (elaborated) literary discourse. At any rate, I do not think that theorizing for the sake of theorizing for the sake of theorizing would lead us anywhere. Theory, or theories, since literature is a multifaceted phenomenon, provides the notions, the markers, the criteria which the reader would use to judge the (literary) text, according to a given set of prescribed or imaginary conventions, and personal or personalized convictions. The history of criticism is a history of travelling theories, some more unsettling than others. Hence my plea, or warning, against bringing the plague to Moroccan scholarship by uncritically importing a product that, sooner or later, will turn literature, as a cultural capital, against itself.

To conclude, here is a summary of my reflections:

1) The Third World must not be impressed by the First World; the latter should be of interest to the former only in as much as it can be useful to its movement towards liberation. Liberation begins with liberating oneself from the inferiority-complex vis-à-vis the First World individual as the embodiment of a modus vivendi and a civilization. The offshoot of this endeavour is a new historical view of the world.
2) The relevance of literary Theory, in my opinion, lies in its usefulness. As an old-fashioned traveller, I personally ride theory only to get somewhere. That is, I am in theory not against theory, nor do I pledge uncritical allegiance to Grand Theories. The former would amount to opposing enquiry into human matters, the latter to sanctioning human oppression.
3) The literary Canon is not sacred, which means that non canonical works can be canonized, and long canonized works may be

decanonized. The actual syllabi in the literature departments of a Third World country like Morocco are, generally speaking, based on criteria of semblance and blind mimesis. Syllabi-makers must not allow themselves to be guided by the Western academic Establishment. Moroccan canonical texts need not be necessarily the work of Nobel prize laureates, or "best buys" in the West. Also important is that canonical works, besides having a pluralistic character, should provide delight as well.

4) Ideology is not necessarily to be identified with professional politics or genuine philosophy. Ideology is what guides the "political" conscious and subconscious of human beings as they interrelate: a sum of ethical and aesthetical beliefs that design and govern the strategies of the human social behaviour.
5) In principle, there is no opposition between social emancipation and Humanism. Both are committed to securing those values that are commensurate with humane and fulfilling lives. Literary scholarship has to be centrally concerned with the place of literature within the networks of social and institutional Power, without neglecting or undermining the aesthetical power of literary discourse.
6) I firmly advocate a discourse of constructive "worldliness" against the de(con)structive discourse of Western monocentrism.

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Edaphos and *Episteme* of Comparative Literature[1]

JÜRI TALVET

The fact that comparative literary studies, against their very nature, have moved in recent decades towards fragmentation and particularization, has increasingly become a point of concern among comparatists themselves (cf. e. g. Kawamoto 2001: 5–13, Gillespie 2003: 10–17). The main postmodern trends in cultural studies, coming since the 1970s predominantly from France (Derrida, Foucault, Bourdieu) and having their powerful repercussion in the US, with a fully institutionalized deconstruction as one of the basic segments of postmodern *episteme*, have despite their novelty and attractiveness revealed little capacity for overcoming the tendency of particularization. On the contrary, they have rather been congenial with an *episteme* that gradually drives us away from *comparison* as a substantial element of synthetic literary research (cf. Talvet 2002: 283–303).

On the one hand, there is a follow-up to formalist-structuralist studies, with a strong accent on linguistic matter (the epistemic camp forged by Derrida and his followers); on the other hand, sociological discourses (Foucault, New Historicism, Bourdieu) have inclined literary research towards an "extra-literary" camp of social power strategies, where the aesthetic-perceptual content of literary creation is almost totally ignored. Besides, we should not overlook the fact that the deconstruction *episteme* has emerged almost exclusively from the Western "centres" of economic-political power. Either consciously or

[1] In its initial form, the present text was published in *Komparatyvistika ir kultūros savivoka. Comparative Literature and Cultural Awareness*. Vilnius: Vilniaus pedagoginis universitetas, 2004, pp. 20–30.

unconsciously, it tends to propagate a paradigm of values that may have no relevance at all for the large "periphery", i.e. the greater part of world culture.

In the present circumstances, as described above, a strong *counter-thinking* to the fashionable and institutionalized narratives is urgently needed. Such a counter-thinking should not at all overlook the epistemic novelty emerging from deconstruction, but at the same time its principal aim should become a radical overcoming of the germs, inherent in deconstruction, of alienating comparative literary studies from the fundamental principles of *comparison* and *synthesis/ symbiosis*.

I suppose that at the time when such a heavy accent in thinking is falling on *episteme*, to the extent that often the existence of any knowledge beyond written discourses is being denied, a constructive "post-deconstructionist" counter-thinking should focus a new interest on the *edaphos* (from Greek ἔδαφος — soil, ground, land, territory) of literary (cultural) research. By *edaphos* I mean the *ur*-ground from which *episteme* departs. I do not deny that *episteme* possesses a self-creative capacity, yet I claim that any *episteme*, however sophisticated or conceptualized, has its deeper roots in a kind of *edaphos* — a reality that is not restricted exclusively to *episteme* or written discourses representing it.

Sometimes it is thought that comparative literature is just one of the methods of literary research, along with structural, psycho-analytical, semiotic, sociological, Marxist, deconstructionist, or what-ever method. Let me doubt in it. On the contrary, I suppose the very nature of *comparison*, inherent in comparative studies, is not only related to *episteme* but also, significantly and substantially, to *edaphos*, the object-premise and departing position of research. Comparison is knowledge, an *episteme* that compares itself to other (different) knowledge, and at the same time it is knowledge that departs from the analysis of several (different) literary (cultural, but also vital) phenomena. It relates "self" to "other" in literature, as well as reality in literature (as "self") to reality beyond literature (as "other"). In that sense, comparative literature can embrace any particular method, but the fact also remains that some methods by their very nature seem to resist comparative *edaphos*, being more congenial with particularization, the principle inherent in positive sciences, or knowledge derived from exclusively epistemic grounds.

The *edaphos* of comparative literature determines its synthetic-philosophic origin. Comparative literature is a kind of philosophy that, in the ideal, strives to wide generalizations about literature, as well as about the relationship of literature with everything that is not literature. Like any philosophy, it poses questions about the meaning of the particular in a general and universal context. Comparative *edaphos* incessantly activizes and dynamizes the *episteme* of comparative literature. For instance, we may carry out a thorough and exhaustive study of the work of a writer in our "own" national-cultural area, but as soon as we locate his/ her work in a wider transnational comparative context, totally new perspectives emerge, a revaluation of the work mostly proves inevitable.

It is often thought that comparative literary research is something traditional and old-fashioned, in contrast with structuralism, post-structuralism, etc., that have supposedly brought in new refreshing ideas. I think the reason for such an impression is that comparative literature, after its early birth in Romanticism, came soon to be identified as a branch of historical sciences, running in parallel, in the same positivist background, with natural sciences. One of its main objectives seemed to be the construction of literary histories, in which the literary process was "backed up" with a profusely detailed social history, combined with equally detailed personal histories of writers. Literary works were claimed to be almost a direct outcome of social and personal circumstances, as well as of all kinds of "influences" from preceding literature.

It is but natural that at the time when other sciences discovered that they did not really depend immanently on historical factors — either ethical, social or religious — and, in more liberal circumstances, starting from the end of the 19th century, effectuated a powerful "leap", humanities, still strongly dependent on spiritual history, started to look old-fashioned. The "close reading" method of New Criticism and the following formalism and structuralism were the most obvious attempts to fill the gap and make humanities catch up with the currents of other, "real" sciences.

However, the attempt, though it has born some interesting fruits, was from the start doomed to failure. The principal reason is that humanities, unlike "real" sciences, research a matter of what the researcher is an immediate and existential part. In other words, humanities deal with passionate matter, and cannot separate themselves

from it. Matter is not dead or obedient to *techne*, but revolts perpetually against the researcher/ writer, as well as survives him/her. The above-said is wittily demonstrated in the novel *Niebla* (*Mist*) published in 1914 by the Spanish philosopher and writer Miguel de Unamuno. No formal method can reveal the complexity of the human spirit. The "triumphs" over matter prove to be short-lived, nothing definite can be proved, and theories, in the sense of "real" sciences, do not work at all. Literary works of the past keep producing miraculous "explosions", resurrect, and cannot be "overcome" as achievements even by the most advanced "modernity". At its best theory can only help to understand matter in its historical retrospect, *a posteriori*.

The understanding of this formal difficulty has led humanities to find support in those branches of the humanities which apparently have more affinity with "real" sciences, like psychology and sociology. However, here the failure is even greater, as the aesthetic-perceptual essence of subject matter becomes either utterly simplified or is entirely left out of the focus. Psychoanalytical and sociological approaches to literature fail to understand literature as art, as a complex process of artistic creativity. For that reason, at least for myself, the attempts to expand literary studies in the sociologically-orientated canon derived from Foucault and Bourdieu or to resuscitate the remnants of Marxism do not look serious enough.

To oppose the one-sidedness of both formalist and sociological approaches, comparative literature should thoroughly revise its *edaphos*. In the field of synchrony, it should boldly trespass national barriers, and try to grasp any phenomenon to be analyzed in its widest possible context. It is not enough for a comparatist to be well versed in "international" theories — which, in fact, in recent times has meant exclusively the *episteme* emanating from Western centres —, but he/ she should not only try to expand his/her *episteme* from "own"-and-"known" to "other" (the unknown) as much as possible, but also, and even more importantly, to extend and vary his / her *edaphos*.

Here, naturally, human existence sets its limits, especially as the field of literary studies depends directly on the knowledge of languages. Besides, as is well known, in practice nearly all comparatists have their specialization in some specific field of foreign literature. The worst case for comparative studies is when e.g. a French "specialist" in US literature does not know anything about French literature. The case becomes improved if he /she still does. However,

to avoid understanding literary process as exclusively produced by economic-political "centres" and "leading" languages, it is utterly desirable that a comparative researcher could also become aware of some other cultural area outside Western metropolized culture.

In the opposite direction, a comparatist's *edaphos* is generally formed with a lesser complicacy, as scholars coming from peripheral areas mostly know, besides their mother tongue, several international languages. Yet here too, often conditioned by educational systems and historical circumstances, deficiencies are well visible. One of the challenges for comparative research in our days in Estonia, for instance, is to overcome the existing split between our specialists of Estonian literature and those of foreign literature.

On the other hand, the language difficulty should not be exaggerated. Literature is never a merely linguistic exercise, and its philosophy does not depart exclusively from language. (Though, language should never be undervalued either.) A mature comparatist who ideally knows at least two greater international languages and also a "peripheral" language and is, besides, capable of understanding, to a certain extent at least, some other languages, can successfully discuss phenomena beyond his/her specialized field or mother culture. In some cases, the approaches from "outside" or the "border" can even produce important changes in the axiology of a literary work or phenomenon. A critical perspective exclusively from "inside" a national culture has never proved to be completely satisfactory in the formation of the criteria of world literature. The critics belonging to "major" literary areas can do a lot for "redeeming" literary works from peripheral areas, to locate them in the wider context of world literature, while a peripheral or distanced perspective of "another" can provide important new accents in the research of even some major works of the Western canon.

Let literary philosophy of Mikhail Bakhtin regarding Rabelais's work serve as an epitome of the above said. It is quite possible that without some of the "edaphic" premises emerging from Bakhtin's existential position, his conception of "official culture", as well as his different approach to materialism, could never have been born. It goes without saying that Bakhtin was not a "specialist" in French literature, but could write with an equal penetration about the work of Dostoyevski, and others.

Another example is the late head of the Tartu (-Moscow) school of semiotics, Yuri Lotman. Elsewhere I have called him a "frontier scholar" par excellence. Indeed, Lotman's balanced cultural philosophy, especially of the latest stage of his writing, conceived in its entirety in the peripheral Estonian town Tartu, can probably be considered as one of the most mature expressions of European cultural research of the end of the 20th century.

The principle of synchrony has been continuously stressed in cultural studies, since the formalist currents started in the 1920s. The main target of synchronic criticism has been — with repercussions reaching the start of the 21st century — the old positivist-historical method in cultural sciences. Indeed, in the literary histories written at least until the middle of the 20th century, and even later, history has had such an enormous impact that sometimes these books look like histories of nations, and not at all like histories of literature. The diachronic excesses have produced a natural contra-reaction, which has led increasingly to the underestimation of any history when dealing with arts.

However, again differently from "real" sciences, humanities seldom "work" when stripped entirely of their historical dimension. Among arts, especially literature is intensely filled with a historical content that embraces practically all aspects of human existence and activity. To evaluate duly the images of literature, a historical comparison, even if it can never be perfect, is inevitable. To explain satisfactorily a literary work of the past, a merely formal apparatus applied from the present is never exhaustive, as it would be insufficient to take, as a measure of comparison, the literary "level" of the present. Quite inescapably, if ever we would like to get closer to a literary work of the past, we should expand our comparative *edaphos* both diachronically and synchronically. Thus, to appreciate duly the aesthetic-perceptual value of *Don Quixote*, we should try to place it in the context of the narrative of his time, as well as of the past and even of the times following the start of the 17th century. Only then we would be able to establish a balanced parallel between the masterpiece of Cervantes and, for instance, García Márquez's *Cien años de soledad*, as myth-creating, magic-realistic and "total" novels, as well as understand the difference of their realism from canonized patterns and stereotypes of Western realistic novel, formed during the 19th century.

I would like to stress here the absolute imperative of comparative studies to keep mutually as close as possible the form and the "content" of a work of literature. There is a deep inter-dependence between the two aspects. None of them should be undervalued, or overestimated. Their inter-relations differ from one particular individual work to another. The renewal of the novel genre by James Joyce evolved, first and foremost, from his revolutionary formal experiments. Franz Kafka, on the contrary, could produce an equally influential renewal by relying on much more traditional narrative structures. A truly comparative *edaphos* should supply a comparatist's *episteme* with a sensibility towards both content and form.

At the same time, a comparatist cannot be a literary researcher in the narrow meaning, as somebody just limiting him/herself consciously to what appears in the literary text and to the means by which image systems are created. He/she inevitably must be open to the realities surrounding literature. As any literary work is also an ideological (if not philosophical) appreciation and interpretation of reality, the critic should try to form an adequate *edaphos* for his/her study, that cannot be limited to the merely literary-aesthetic. Any literary work is a unique creative act, with its autonomy and laws; yet it is born in circumstances that can either enhance or inhibit it, both perceptually and aesthetically. No creator is devoid of sensibility towards the temporal reality surrounding him/her. These factors cannot be ignored. A comparatist should see his/her purpose not in specializing in the reality that surrounds a literary work, but by relating reality outside the work to reality in the work, try to assimilate literary creation as a philosophy, a discourse in images that by interpreting and reflecting outside reality, dynamizes and actualizes it.

Once again I would like to refer to the examples of Mikhail Bakhtin and Yuri Lotman. The theory emerging from the work of both embodies a sophisticated synchrony. Yet both great scholars were also deeply involved in diachrony, which formed a solid basis for their literary philosophy. By researching the complicated modifications of the human mind and society in the transition from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance, Bakhtin could conceive of "official culture" with its huge dogmatic apparatus as a perpetual diachronic recurrence, extending from the Middle Ages to the Soviet empire of his lifetime. The roots of Lotman's mature philosophy were in German pre-Romanticism. From the position of historical-cultural relativism,

originating from the work of Herder, Goethe, and others, Lotman could reach the understanding of the universal not as based on the proclaimed universality of reason — a belief that has been powerfully propagated since the Enlightenment —, but on the individual, embracing a complicated inter-dynamics in the semiosphere, where the individual, according to Lotman, is inseparable from its biological-physical condition.

The *edaphos* of comparative literature has not only to do with the research object, but also with the researcher, as a subject. It is extremely unlikely that a literary philosopher, devoid of sensual propensities — the very basis of artistic sensibility — could understand the cultural "other" and the image structures and philosophy created by it. The peculiarity of literary research is that it, in a way, overlaps with original (so to say, primary) writing. While a writer compares the phenomena of the world and constructs his philosophy in images on the basis of his "comparative world research", the literary researcher's task is even more complicated. He/she not only has to follow the path of the mind and senses of the writer in researching the world, but must centre his/her comparative research on the inter-dynamics between the world created by the writer and the greater one beyond it. He/she must be able to explicate the aesthetic mechanism supporting the work of the writer, and at the same time remain open to the existential and deeply sensorial impulses that feed it.

Here lies the radical difference between a "real" scientist and a literary researcher. The latter, besides being a scientist, must be also a philosopher, and at the same time should not expel poetic sensibility from him-/herself. The phenomenon of poets-scholars or writers-critics is not at all anything causal. Even if the times of Romanticism, when the main literary theories were set up by poets and writers, cannot be returned, the field of literary studies and, especially, of comparative studies, should remain widely open to the experience of writers and poets, who by their very sensual propensity are well prepared to move on an open comparative *edaphos*, to provide *episteme* with a perpetually vital dimension.

Last but not least, in the mutual relationship between comparative *edaphos* and *episteme*, literary history has had and will probably always have a key role. Literary history itself can be viewed as an essential comparative *edaphos*, or at least as a wide intersection of *episteme* and *edaphos*, from which all kinds of discourses on literature

depart. At the same time, the difficulties of constructing and writing literary histories are well known, especially as the older type of literary histories — which, as I already mentioned, have often been just histories of societies and nations, rather than histories of literary creation — seems to be exhausted and hardly looks satisfactory.

Literary histories are, by the way, connected with *edaphos* in an almost literal sense. I mean by it the soil of any culture, and especially, literature, as exclusively supported and represented by a *natural* language. Although we speak of globalization, internationalization, inter-cultural dynamics, etc., it remains a fact that in practice the majority of the histories of literature written to date, have been histories of national literatures. Those have emerged from a concrete individual cultural space, determined first and foremost by the natural language it practices. I am well aware of deviations from this pattern, like in the case when a writer has worked simultaneously in several languages (Beckett, Pessoa, Nabokov, etc.), has mostly used other language than his/her native tongue (Unamuno, Baroja, who were Basks but wrote in Spanish), or when the vernacular has been used by writers of other nationality (thus, the earliest examples of poetry in Estonian was written in the 17th century by German clergymen). However, these deviations do not constitute a general rule.

It remains a fact also that the major attempts, known until today, to write universal or world literary histories have been based on a more or less mechanical compilation of histories of national literatures. It means, they have lacked unity, or the unity — for instance, the Marxist point of view exploited in the literary histories written in the former Soviet Union — have been externally (ideologically) and artificially imposed on the material, not emerging from the literary process itself.

It would be even more hazardous to attempt to write an integrated literary history of a "trans-national" character, in which different linguistic spaces are involved. Despite the theories constructed some twenty and more years ago by Marxist scholars, any project to write a literary history of the peoples of the Soviet Union proved to be a complete failure, just because *edaphos* was constructed artificially, it lacked its natural roots. The difficulties for writing a genuinely adequate and objective literary history of the Iberian Peninsula, have well been described by Arturo Casas in his recent article (Casas 2003: 71–100). There would be obviously little difficulty in involving in

such a history literature written in Spanish, either by the native Spanish writers or by the Catalan, Basque, or Galician writers who have created their work in Spanish. The difficulty, however, emerges as soon as the scope of the history intends to trespass national-linguistic frontiers.

Historically, there has been an intense interchange of cultural values between different nations that at present constitute the Spanish state and the population of the "peripheral" national areas has been to a great extent bilingual. That fact slightly mitigates the resistance of *edaphos* in case of the Iberian cultural space. However, the natural conditions of *edaphos* can never be totally overlooked. Thus, to provide another example from the Baltic cultural space, Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians have shared a lot in their recent history and evidently there are parallel processes and analogies in their culture. However, any attempt to write a more detailed literary history of the Baltic people is likewise doomed to failure, because the resistance of the linguistic *edaphos* here is absolute, as all three Baltic nations have created their literature in different languages. The hope that such a corpus of translated literature could be created which would enable the researchers of all three nations to approach it in equal conditions, looks hardly more than just wishful thinking.

To end in a more positive note, I would still claim that a steady effort at enlarging the comparative *edaphos* and the correspondingly activized *episteme* can disclose encouraging horizons. A new quality can be induced in national literary histories, when due relations between the "self" and the "other" are established, i. e. when different phenomena of national literature are adequately located in the wider context of world literature, or viewed in the cultural background of a historic unity beyond the national culture. Thus, in the case of Estonian literature, the wider context would be European and Western literature, in general, and in a smaller space — though strongly restricted in time and also by the language difference — the ethnically conditioned contacts with Finnish culture.

On the other hand, although an ideal project of a history of world literature may well belong to the realm of utopia, our *episteme* of the values created by literature can substantially be complemented by even much less ambitious projects. I mean that despite all obstacles and the "edaphic resistance", comparatists of different nations should still see one of their major tasks in writing histories of world literature.

The limitations of their national *edaphos* should not be considered a disadvantage but be understood rather as a unique value in constituting a dialogic *episteme*, an interchange of discourses coming simultaneously from all three perspectives — "centres", "peripheries" and "borders". Only a *nationally* orientated team of *comparatists* working at the project of a history of world literature can duly appreciate and make stand out all connections between world literature ("other") and their own literature ("self"). The plurality of such histories will gradually set up a paradigm, in which new values and phenomena are involved.

We cannot hope that an international team would write a history of world literature that could satisfy equally all national ambitions. We cannot hope either that an ideal method or theoretical *episteme* could make possible the construction of a satisfactory literary history. In past and recent practices, *episteme* has been strongly biased by ideological preferences. Although ideology cannot be avoided while treating history, we would still move on a securer ground, if we were to turn to the intersecting area of *episteme* and *edaphos*, which still, basically, means departing from the natural condition of literature itself. For instance, the application of a generic-typological principle in constructing a literary history of a wide transnational area, like Europe, Scandinavia or Latin-America, would be nothing beyond the feasible. Such histories have already been written, and they could be improved, if we do not let us be attracted excessively by national history, on the one hand, and ideologically biased *episteme*, on the other.

Step by step, we should try to widen the horizon of our concrete individual comparative *edaphos*, as well as *episteme*, to form a continuous, never-ending process of identifying world literature and ourselves as part of it.

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Literature and Globalization

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At the dawn of the 21st century globalization as the new fashionable concept has usurped theorizing in all the spheres of human experience and has affected deeply both humanities and social sciences and art, literature and the sphere of the quotidian. Under globalization, as the latest expression of the five centuries of triumphant Western modernity, the free market and democracy are proclaimed as the only goals of human society's development. What is definitely winning today is the eternal a-temporal all-embracing consumption and idealization of the market, devouring all other dimensions of human existence and becoming a certain finite and at the same time always unattainable point of arrival. The word "globalization", describing the international economic flows, emerged only in the 1960s, when the concept of "global village" was first introduced by McLuhan (McLuhan 1967), but the phenomenon or rather a tendency to globalization is certainly much older and is connected with geographical expansion and the widening of the known limits of the world that started at the very beginning of modernity with European Renaissance.

It is obvious that the last two decades have been marked with the multiple shift, including the shift from the system of nation states with separate segments of national cultures and literatures, to the global space and global literature, the most expressive and embodied metaphor of which is the spider image of internet. Other crucial aspects of this shift include the sphere of subjectivity, the turn to the hybrid, flowing, changing identities and more flexible hierarchies. Making the generally accepted concepts of center and margins loose, globalization easily traverses today the previously impenetrable borders of colonial-imperial difference, so that even capitalism itself

diffuses in the direction of (semi)periphery, flexibly adapting to completely different and alien ideologies.

Along with the obvious aspect of globalization connected with unification there is also the transcultural aspect, more promising for the future. The global is not necessarily synonymous with unification, common identification shared by everyone, while the local is not always marked by heterogeneity or based on fixed differences. Diversity itself as a powerful myth of postmodernity and a prerequisite for the market discourses of globalization, that elaborated more flexible and hidden ways of self-assertion and mechanisms of controlling difference and diversity, necessarily needs transcultural tendencies. Thus, the complex interaction of the two extremes of globalization — the unification and the transculturation — is based on the washing away of the boundaries between them and on their constant mutual complimentarity. The transcultural element in globalization accentuates borders, migrations, multilingualism, cultural multiplicity, the lack of previously unshaken hierarchies and discovering and bringing forward the possibilities of mixed, hybrid forms of socio-cultural interactions that used to be interpreted before only from the position and within the limits of generally accepted notions of "pure" national languages and cultural traditions.

At the same time, the financial-economic centers, accumulating "power" in the traditional understanding, have not disappeared, yet their role is slowly changing. And this logic of external multicentricity under the deeper preservation of the Western (or Northern) priority — is repeated verbatim in such spheres of "bio-political production" as culture, literature, and the arts. Distribution of power depends a lot on the distribution of knowledge and on the forms of its organization in each potential global center; and here the so-called First World countries are still beyond competition, as they possess not only a sufficient amount of knowledge but also and more importantly, a perfect mechanism of their dissemination in the rest of the world.

Among the recent theorizing of cultural aspects of globalization there are many interesting works, such as A. Appadurai's (Appadurai 1996), L. Bauzon's (Bauzon 1997), D. Chakrabarti's (Chakrabarti 1992), W. Mignolo's (Mignolo 2000), G. Spivak's (Spivak 1999), M. Hardt's and A. Negri's (Hardt, Negri 2000), etc. However, within the literary studies proper the concept of globalization and the study of its many-faceted influence on the literary process has still not received

all the attention it deserves. It is surprising because the very institute of literacy and writing and later — literature has actively promoted modernity and globalization. And global literature in today's understanding in many ways is a child of globalization, particularly because of the changing laws of production and dissemination of written texts in modernity, as well as the changing relations between "foreign" and "native" texts, which brings forward the complex problem of translation, crucial for the process of globalization of world literature.

Many postmodern theories of culture connected with the concept of globalization interpret the future of literature and literary studies rather pessimistically. Today we witness a major change of, or sometimes negation of, practically all elements that at some point led to the construction of the modern ideas of aesthetic canon, national tradition, world literature, as they were shaped within the nation-state model. Literature itself within this interpretation cannot possibly keep up with the internet, but even if it does not die completely in the 21st century, it would remain interesting only as a product or a symptom of culture, various ideological practices and institutions. This is a clear sign of the cultural bend in contemporary literary studies and literature itself, as well as a clear sign of the omnipresent globalization.

At the same time the accentuating of cyber and hyper-literature should not lead to anxieties that the traditional book culture would come to an end, because the nature of fiction remains the same and the computer technologies do not alter the principles and metaphors of literary culture that lie also at the basis of internet texts or other contemporary trans-mediative phenomena (Eco 1996).

The unifying aspect of cultural globalization in the sphere of fiction is expressed in the quantitative predominance of Anglophone material, in the absolutism of Anglo-Saxon models and international English as the new *lingua franca*. The processes of linguistic unification cause lamentations on the part of national identity champions but they do not take into account that the choice of language today does not equal the choice of national identity. We cannot regard writing in English as a sign of automatic adherence to English or American literature. The English of transcultural writers is very far from its British origin and is only a choice of means, in most cases lacking any national(ist) pathos but marked with the market pathos instead, i.e. again, bringing us back to the main element of globalization. It is easier to sell writings in English and they will be read by a

larger audience. Here English somehow loses its national belonging by acting as the language of globalization. Thus the unifying tendency in relation to literature is aspiring for the text lacking any national and cultural specificity, any clear connection with space and time. The ideal in this case would be an internet text, created by nobody knows whom, nobody knows where and for what kind of reader, which once again drastically changes the common relations between the text and the context, that in this case can be defined as the text outside or without a context or a text functioning in any context.

Many genres of mass literature today have almost reached the complete homogenization, even if they exist in the traditional printed form and have a name of an author on their cover. This refers to such forms of mass literature as thrillers, mystery stories, fantasy, romance, etc. that truly became international and global. Although the very mechanism of international distribution of genres and styles is hardly new and has lain at the basis of disseminating of many literary forms before, its scale in mass cultural production today is really global and unprecedented. This further erodes the very division between the mass and elite literary products in the globalized cultural space. For example, a large group of the so-called mainstream novels targeted primarily at a middle-brow audience is built on the mass-reproduced principles of "magic realism" which cannot alter their aesthetic mediocrity. On the other hand, a book written in the popular genre can turn out to be a high-brow masterpiece. Certain genres, forms and devices become international and globalized much faster than before, conquering much wider spaces. And it is precisely here that the fragility and blurredness of the boundary between the unifying and trans-cultural element of globalization is to be found.

The loss of the autonomous nature of art and the change of its traditional functions has also marked the last decades of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st century. This leads to the gradual replacement of the goals of art with its means and is connected primarily with the all-penetrating mechanization, with what is often called the aesthetics of cyber space, where the main aesthetic criterion is the connection with high-tech and art turns once again into techne/skill. In internet there is an illusion that the process completely swallows the space, in a way negating it, combining the technological and commercial aspects of communication, as a result of which the spatial-temporal relations, previously used as the basis of communicative models in

fiction, are indeed being destroyed or re-shaped. Almost completely repeating the logic of de-territorialization as defined by Deleuze and Guattari (Deleuze, Guattari 1972) and without the necessity to be re-territorialized, the cyber space externally works for the vanishing of "here" and "now", for the eroding of the dichotomy of the real and the imaginary. Internet, as the embodiment of globalization ideal, really does not have either center or peripheries, potentially negating such concepts of the printed literary world as authorship, copy rights, censorship, traditional readers, canons and pantheons, creating new interactive forms of control over the narrative, the plot and the characters' identities. The world of cyberspace, that many people think would replace literature in the next decades, the world in which technologies link with commercialization, operates only with the category of quantity, the principle of possession, dividing the world into those who have access to internet, and those who do not, or even those who use internet as an educational tool and those who thoughtlessly play computer games. Thus the old notion of developed and underdeveloped (in this case in the informational sense) countries, cultures, spaces — is being reproduced again.

Another important aspect of globalization, demonstrated in the sphere of literature and arts, is bringing forward the inter-mediality and the permeable boundaries between various languages of art, the acceleration of synthesis of various kinds of art and the growing complexity in the forms of mediation. Today, under the general tendency to mechanization, the previously strict division into the visual and verbal, image and word — is being erased, giving way to synergy, to the hybrid texts — both in cultural and media sense, with the growing visual orientation (*Mosaic* 1998).

Besides, cultural globalization touches upon the very production and distribution of literary texts, the institute of criticism, literary prizes, turning literature ultimately into a commodity, which in the conditions of blurred difference between mass and elite literature, between fictional and non-fictional texts, makes the process of commercialization in the sphere of literary art a really global phenomenon. In the case of an individual writer commercialization is obvious — he or she starts writing in such a way that their works sell well. This is not a new phenomenon, although today it acquires certain new features, such as the fascination with otherness in its exotic variant, enchantment with difference, that effects the demand in the

book market. The exotic in this case has to be presented in the comfortable packaging, never irritating the common reader, never scaring him with its otherness or inaccessibility, but also never openly humiliating that otherness that continues to be stereotyped.

An obvious example of growing commercialization in literature would be the changing politics in the distribution of the most prestigious corporate literary prizes (like the famous Booker Prize) which demonstrate the flexibility of globalization in the interactions of the dominant and subaltern cultures and in manipulating cultural diversity. The new Booker tactic is based on the exploitation of the exotics when a writer from the (ex)-Third World — bought by Booker — is treated as a peculiar kind of "colonial goods" (Huggan 2001).

The chaotic multiplication of difference, the fast development and legitimating of cultural multi-stylistics in the last decades of the 20th century (which naturally affects all the sides of cultural reproduction from de-hierarchization to the radical change in the mechanisms of canonization and rethinking of otherness in the new diversified world) still allows us to single out a general line or trend in the movement of the global humanities. The 1970–mid 1980s were the time of the global influence of Western postmodern theories and practices on world culture, a deconstruction of modernity from within. The non-western deconstruction of modernity remained marginal for a long time, while otherness continued to be described most often from the outside, as a material of Western study and not a thinking subject or a source of aesthetics. Any efforts to give a voice to the other ended in its assimilation to the Western values or its exaggerated opaqueness and absolutism of difference. The next decade demonstrated the beginning of recoil from the postmodernist model and either its adaptation to the non-Western contexts or a quest for the parallel, echoing, but alternative to postmodern epistemic ways and aesthetics. First of all it is the postcolonial complex as the most global in its impact, but also a number of sub-discourses of otherness, such as eco-aesthetics, the modern variety of feminisms, the homoerotic discourses, etc. In the 1990s "otherness" colored the whole semiosphere in its shades and then froze, having become an object of intense theorizing on the meta-cultural level, to use Y. Lotman's phrase (Lotman 2000: 260).

The legitimized reign of *xenophilia* typical for the rhetoric of globalization (even if it usually a fake quantitative plurality which erases certain borders of division into *same* and *other* and immediately draws the new ones — equally impenetrable) is connected with the unexpectedly posed question of the socio-political nature of art. The 1990s have brought with them certain neo-vanguard tendencies of revolutionary changes and interest in the pragmatic element, stressing the long forgotten problem of the cultural-political engagement. To be an *other* for an artist becomes more and more difficult because predictable otherness is one of the consumer goods in the contemporary politically correct world and stops to perform its main role of deviation, often structuring itself as an angry group radicalism leading to the loss of any individuality.

An Australian scholar Simon During, among others, reflecting on the logic of the global humanities' trends in the last three decades, points out that the academic fashion changed in the 1980s from postmodernism to the postcolonial paradigm and finally, approximately from the mid 1990s — to globalization (During 1998: 32). Postcoloniality accentuates de-historization as a rejection of the linear teleological model of time and undoubtedly merges here with postmodernism. Globalization accentuates the idea of de-territorialization, also present in postmodernism, but translates it into the scale of the fragmentary but global world system, reuniting the Western and non-Western or not quite Western phenomena. Globalization demonstrates that postcoloniality and postmodernism (as well as nationalist and fundamentalist discourses) are just two sides of the same coin — the global process of modernity. If postmodernism is generally a Western phenomenon, deconstructing and exploding the European epistemic and aesthetic model from within, then postcoloniality is a not always successful attempt at rejecting this European meta-narrative and giving the voice to an "other", translating the problematic of imperial-colonial difference into the language which would be understandable for the West. When the globalization dimension is being introduced, it inevitably brings together once again the Western and post-Western (not necessarily postcolonial) discourses, finding possible points of confluence and common denominators. The most crucial of them is the imperial-colonial side of modernity that has been used as the basis for literary studies only sporadically and in particular local contexts. However it seems to be a

key concept for the future development of global literary studies and re-articulation of comparative studies in the conditions of cultural globalization (Tlostanova 2004).

In contemporary discussions of artistic phenomena one of the crucial questions remains that of aesthetics. However, the sphere of aesthetics itself undergoes a lot of changes under the influence of globalization and the present accent on the cultural and ideological dimensions in the study of art and literature. The aesthetics is being dethroned and taken off its usual pedestal and becomes just one of the discourses, culturally and historically contextualized and in need of study along with other no less important elements. In other words, it is the idolization of aesthetics without its deconstruction that is being questioned. I agree with the position expressed by Walter Mignolo, who proposed the creation of a new philology that would study not texts and aesthetics, but systems of literacy, the distribution and functioning of languages, based on border epistemology, taking into account the plurilanguaging, the trans-cultural and trans-imperial tendencies, and not so closely connected with the discourses of national language and literatures, thus reconsidering the traditionalist idea of comparative studies (Mignolo 2000: 220–221) The question that arises here is how to implement this principle in literary analysis. It is necessary — as the next step — to elaborate in more detail the body and basis of this new trans-disciplinary philology and to try to apply them in the concrete philological analysis. It seems that there are two dominant models in conceptualizing the aesthetic sphere today — the "sweat shop sublime" and the transcultural aesthetics. The first one is closely connected with the Western position, while the second — with non-Western.

In Kant's *The Critique of Judgment* the sublime is presented as the realization of power, greatness and infinity. In contrast with the beautiful it is connected with chaos, primordial forces and disorder of an almost Dionysian kind, causing not a pacification but rather frightening the audience, appealing to our imagination and not to intellect (Kant 1994: 93, 96, 98–99). That is why Kant considers as sublime not the human reality, but primarily the nature. All of this, in Kant's view, elevates our spiritual forces, raising them above their natural level and allows us to discover in ourselves a completely new ability to resist and oppose, calling for our strength to measure the world by the seemingly absolute power of nature. What is then the

sublime of globalization and how is it realized aesthetically inside and outside of the Western culture? In Bruce Robbins's definition the specific aesthetic sensibility, generated by globalization, is based on the effort to put together and link the common situation of every-day consumption and the myriads of interrelated hands and minds that actually produce the objects of this consumption in the conditions of hard exploitation. The sweat shop sublime thus acts as a link between a separate individual and the global collective situation of the common lot of all people living in the time and space of globalization. This is often a sudden and shocking realization of the global dimension of being, strictly positioned in economic and cultural sense by means of the well-known word combination "sweat shop". But the discovery of this dimension in the world of singular, mundane, intimate experience does not lead to the growth of social and political activity or to any kind of action for that matter. Quite the opposite, it leads to the sense of ineptness, weakness and inertia (Robbins 2002: 85–86).

Kant points out a specific mechanism of the sublime's effect, where imagination reaches the highest possible point in an effort to see and embrace the un-embraceable unity of the sublime and, not being able to do that, brings the individual back to the private and subjective sphere. Yet we experience aesthetic and ethical pleasure due to this very process because for Kant without the development of moral ideas which we acquire as a result of culture's influence upon us, the sphere of sublime turns out to be just "raw" and exists only in its awful frightening form. In the sphere of the sweat shop sublime, according to Robbins, the private and the public merge in the aesthetic and political attempt to reunite in the area of collective unconscious on the international (not national) level (Robbins 2002: 86). The very subject, by means of whose sensibility Robbins illustrates the sweat shop sublime, is definitely a subject of the First World, its successful representative, who in a private environment all of a sudden starts contemplating the complexity of the world system that provides consumer goods and services for him, and also the lot of those who are taking part in globalization from the other side and often against their will. The next step after the realization of this globalization sublime invariably is the awareness of the impossibility of his own actions on the same global level, the lack of will and consequently, the quickly return to the minimalist level of personal mundane experience.

The Kantian explanation of the sublime mechanism is relevant in the case of sweat shop sublime as well, where the degrees of infinitely large and equally infinitely small are being played against each other, where the pleasure of consumption flows into the pain and guilt, thus gripping the subject in the moment of the sweat shop sublime — at least for a short time taking him onto the global transcendental level in order to almost immediately bring him back into the sphere of private life and deprive him of the possibility of social action and resistance. The sweat shop sublime is a part of a specific half-realized sensibility of globalization, a self-positioning of its First World subject which is expressed not always consciously in the art, the literature, the sphere of the quotidian, in the aesthetic experience of the subject of globalization.

However, all of this is true about the First-World subject — be it a philosopher or a housewife, a conservative or a left-radical activist. As for the Third-World subject, his reaction to the sweat shop sublime will be predictably completely different. In the caricature from the *New Yorker* that Robbins quotes in his article, the possible Third-World reaction is summarized and, we should add, made primitive and objectified in just one possibility of hatred, resentment and helpless anger. This kind of interpretation is not far from Kant's aesthetics of the sublime, particularly in its alienation of the other, in the way his sensibility is rendered as mediated fear that Kant also spoke about when describing the reaction of the "raw" uncultured mind of the savage to the natural disasters and cataclysms.

As for the interpretation of the sublime, presented by this "raw" consciousness itself, a lot of trans-cultural trans-imperial and trans-colonial fictional works are precisely such examples. They are preoccupied primarily with the deconstruction of the western Kantian and post-Kantian concept of the sublime, the demonstration of its ideological and epistemic biases and moreover, the historical limitations of the very concept of the sublime, its close connection with the western aesthetics and the actual uselessness of this concept for the subaltern mind — both speaking and silent.

It is also worth noting what happens with the sublime in the post-Soviet space. To which pole does it gravitate, to the pole of the world capital or the world labor? The post-Soviet Russia together with most of the ex-Soviet republics would very much like to become a part of the world capital and "suffer" together with Robbins's subject from

the sweat shop sublime. But in reality the post-Soviet space cannot enter not only the world of capital but also it cannot be accepted into the company of the world proletariat. This does not mean that in the post-Soviet cultural imaginary there is no place for the category of the sublime, though the aesthetics of post-Soviet sublime is specific due to Russia's ambiguous and marginal role in the world economy today — its subject cannot feel guilty as the character from the *New Yorker* and does not passively consume the fruit of other people's labor. But at the same time the post-Soviet subject does not experience Caliban's anger, or the postcolonial necessity of "writing back to the center" and deconstructing of its epistemic and aesthetic position. The Russian intellectual elites see the western tradition as their own, having been brought up on western European culture and identifying with it, even if the development of the world history, economy and politics denied this interpretation. The post-Soviet sublime is closely related to the specificity of post-Soviet subjectivity. Instead of the guilt and social apathy of the conscientious consumer, the post-Soviet subject sees himself as a victim of globalization, but a victim in a different from postcolonial discourse sense.

This sensibility is closely connected with the unresolved duality of the Russian empire and its cultural imaginary as a quasi-western Slavic-orthodox subaltern empire whose subject is loaded with specific complexes of secondary eurocentrism and exceptionalism which today — in the times of its defeat — is constructed and realized generally as sacrifice and suffering as the idea of a certain spiritual transcendental "victory in defeat". It is in this sphere that there emerge the reasons and impulses of the post-Soviet sublime — an ex-imperial subject's world vision based on his superiority complex and all of a sudden finding himself in the situation of being thrown out, excluded from the historical process which he used to see and still does see within the western frames and categories. Globalization for this reason is present in the post-Soviet cultural imaginary not a standard explanation of the exploitation of the world labor by the world capital (the main narrative in the relations of the First and the Third Worlds), but a forceful and sudden bringing of the culture and its inhabitants to the situation of non-existence for the rest of the world that is connected with the virtual nature of exploitation in globalization. Globalization itself in the minds of most post-Soviet subjects exists precisely in its mediated form, not globally, but through the realization

of global changes in the Russian/Soviet empire which turned out to be one of its main victims. The condition of the Soviet/Russian empire, isolated from the world system, acting as an outsider of modernization, narrows down the vision of its common inhabitant, who sees the effects of globalization sublime only within the frame of one collapsing empire, defeated by and not interesting for the West any more, as if it had vanished. This effect is expressed in the minimalist mood of most post-Soviet fiction. Here the personal history of the common person is initially catastrophic and in fact closer to the situation of the Third-World subject. But the post-Soviet individual, in contrast with the classical subaltern, does not associate his personal tragedy with the First World, the western capital or neo-liberalism. In most cases the "enemies" are its local agents of various kinds — from the so-called Russian "democrats" and to the simple swindlers whose images are abundant in the pages of books and on the TV screen today. The very complexity and irrationality of the post-Soviet situation does not allow the champions of the post-Soviet sublime to express this larger global dimension in a clear form. There is probably only one recurrent sensibility — of the present community of the fate of the millions, the ex-subalterns and their masters, who all of a sudden found themselves in a similar situation of being thrown out of history, even if it is a rather miserable history of globalization. The mechanism of this sublime is similar to Kantian and not aimed at the dethroning of the very ethical-aesthetic system of coordinates offered by Western culture. It is also a depiction of the private, and in this case a very miserable, life of a common individual, who in contrast with Robbins's consumer is usually presented in the post-Soviet fiction in the situation of physical survival and his personal sphere is connected with the lacking ability to solve the most elementary questions and problems against the background of dark, sinister and irrational forces of history. Against the will of the common person and due to historical cataclysms of gigantic scale, the global forcefully penetrates his private life, the global that connects together the lives of the millions of the subjects of the (ex)empire, all of a sudden thrown out of the usual social existence, deprived of their status, work, citizenship, ability to survive, self-respect and any prospects for the future. Here the moral sphere is acting not in the form of guilt and self-justification, but in the form of resentment, although it ends in both cases with lack of action.

An important element of the sweat shop sublime is definitely the solidarity, the rejection of the previous urge to divide the subject from the object, although the effect of participation is annulled due to the primacy of the private sphere, of the personal life, or, in Robbins' words, "the tyranny of the close over the distant" (Robbins 2002: 86). Participation in the post-Soviet sublime is again of a slightly different kind — it is the forced participation based on the solidarity of exclusion, on the strange condition of realizing your own non-being in philosophical, epistemic, economic, cultural sense, which arises in the consciousness of the post-Soviet subject in those rare moments when he is not preoccupied with simple survival (as the opposite pole of the Western consumption) or when this survival becomes impossible and the habit of thinking in abstract categories, acquired from the Western tradition, makes him draw generalizations, in which, alas, there is no place for himself.

The second and much more promising aesthetic model today is the model based on transculturation, regarded as a dynamic diversity, connected with a constant cultural polylogue under which a complete synthesis or a complete cultural translation do not happen, where cultures meet and interact, but do not merge. A Caribbean writer and philosopher E. Glissant in this respect points out not only the right to difference, but also the right to opacity, "that is not enclosure within an impenetrable autarchy but subsistence within an irreducible singularity. Opacities can coexist and converge, weaving fabrics. To understand this truly one must focus on the texture of the weave and not on the nature of its component" (Glissant 1997).

In contemporary art and literature the transcultural efforts at creating specific artistic models, alternative or parallel to the post-modernist theories and practices — are coming forward. These aesthetic phenomena deconstruct the cultural basis of modernity either completely from outside, from a non-western point of view, or from the illusive in-between-ness which is defined by various scholars and writers in different terms — as a "third time-space" (Anzaldúa, 1987) as a "border epistemology" (Mignolo 2000), as an "other thinking" (Khatibi 1990), etc., which in general can be regarded as various redefinitions of the problematic defined by Deleuze and Guattari as "de-territorialization". The transcultural aesthetics cannot be understood without such key concepts of alternative theories of globalization as trans-modernity (Dussel 2002), contra-modernity (Bhabha

1994), unhomeleness (Bhabha 1994), cultural epistemic hybridity and creolization (Glissant 1997).

In the sphere of literature it refers to the re-conceptualized problem of multilingualism introduced many years ago by M. Bakhtin (Bakhtin 1975), as well as to the rejection of national monotopic epistemologies and the model of stable fixed national culture, literature or language, closely connected with locale, as the constructs that cannot correspond any more to the changing world order and in the sphere of humanities — act as a procrustean bed in the unsuccessful attempts of traditionalist literary theorists and critics to pigeonhole artistic phenomena within the discredited category of the national. There emerges a whole group of writers throughout the world today who can be called post- and beyond national, transcultural authors, not fitting the previously accepted critical clichés and models.

The transcultural aesthetics then can be defined through the multiplicity and unfinished nature of the position and subjectivity of the practicing individual, who is between the ironically and critically interpreted western aesthetics, and the episteme of the marginal, of the absolute and non-absolute other. One of the most interesting features of transcultural aesthetics is probably its rhizomic, non-linear nature which is expressed among other things in a specific phenomenon of interpolation. It is realized in the sphere of non-systemic, unpredictable, and not in the orderly hierarchies, in trans- and not mono-disciplinary forms. As it is generally the case with fiction marked with globalization influence and its painful interest in otherness, the main narrative of trans-national and trans-cultural literature is that of meeting with the *other* in its various forms — from language to characters, from epistemology to aesthetics, while the very models of characters' socio-cultural behavior in alien contexts — from adaptation to imitation, from borrowing to appropriation, from assimilation to resistance — are being brought forward. Thus relations with otherness remain the main meta-narrative of trans-cultural fiction, demonstrating constant interaction and interweaving of many voices, discourses, locales, which in principle cannot be resolved in any utopian idea of synthesis. In this sense transcultural fiction is a parallel, but not an equal, phenomenon in relation to Western postmodernism.

Within this beyond-national aesthetic model the most interesting group of writers is probably that of cultural migrants, the Ahasueruses of the postindustrial world, the Deleuzian nomads, many of whom

ended up in the First World. The largest group of new trans-cultural writers today is the representatives of the ex-Third World, who are now often critical cosmopolitans who cannot be easily classified as French, American, English or Russian writers. Such restless Ahasueruses inhabit many modern fictional works, sensitive to today's constant chaotic movement of great masses of people — looking for better jobs, better life, for protection and basic human rights, for survival under the growing sense of lacking roots, traditions, sense of past, any stable group identification. The very transcultural sensibility is best of all expressed in the problematic and metaphor of migrations, in-between-ness, transit, accurately defining the existential situation of the subject of this world — a radically deterritorialized individual.

Embracing many sides of identification — from national, which it largely denies, to ethnic-racial and ethnic-cultural — the transcultural aesthetics focuses clearly around the genealogy of colonial and imperial differences, inside which the concrete local histories defining the artistic worlds of particular authors were shaped. In this sense, a writer from the ex-British colony grounds himself in the local history which is very different from the imperial-colonial problematic of Latin America, an immigrant writer from the Third World is practically incomparable with the non-absolute other from the ex-second world, e.g. from Eastern Europe. At the same time, practically all new immigrants in the US, Western Europe and — after the collapse of the Soviet Union — even partly in Russia — exist in the gap between at least, two imperial traditions, they somehow have to be double-faced Januses with multiple visions, which gives their artistic endeavors an important additional dimension.

In the favorable conditions of the winning trans-cultural tendencies in cultural globalization and its literary production there will be no monotopic totalitarian trends in art and fiction in the future, such as classicism or modernism, which were possible precisely because they had a rather narrow geo-cultural sphere of influence and were openly eurocentric. In this sense the critical virus of post-modernism and alternative theories and practices has played a very important role in the cultural and literary dynamic in the last decades and even if tomorrow the fashionable concepts of "de-centration", "differance", "epistemic uncertainty", "writing back to the center", etc, would step aside, the critical deconstructive tendency will probably remain longer. In the works of the most interesting contemporary writers

postmodernism has long been digested and retreated entirely into the style being often enriched with new and different tasks — usually connected with trans-cultural tendencies. This is typical for South African Noble Prize Laureate J. M. Coetzee, for an American Paul Auster and an Australian Peter Carey, a Turkish writer Orhan Pamuk and a Guyanese emigrant David Dabydeen and certainly — for Salman Rushdie, as well as many others. Their aesthetic quest can be associated with "negotiation", with floating multiple narratives, with the efforts not only to preserve the stylistics and key concepts of postmodernism — such as deterritorialization, theatricality, total skepticism, but also go back unexpectedly and in round about ways to the forgotten and discredited ethical dimension.

The major tendency of the post-post-modernist global literary space which seems most fruitful for the future is further going out of the boundaries and limits of Western culture, which can take place both in the form of negativistic "provincializing" of European cultural legacy and in the form of meaning-producing positive transcultural processes. A typical Western interest in, fear and desire of the *other*, e.g. the Orient, depending on whether the exotization or the demonization model prevails, already in Western postmodernism changes to intellectual and epistemic interest in the cultural polylogue, though at the same time the idea of impenetrability and opaqueness of the absolute *other* is still preserved. The literary attempts at conceptualizing of this problematic are among the most interesting today, because usually having western postmodernism in mind, they deconstruct it from a specific ethical, epistemic and aesthetic position of an "other thinking", alternative aesthetics, non-absolute otherness, etc.

Globalization in literature is connected primarily with the tendency towards beyond-the-national, to de-centered and de-canonized diversity, with the obvious turn from ethnic-cultural, national, group identifications to neo-universal (though not universalizing) models that cut across cultures, (ex)empires, (ex)colonies, languages, religions, turning the older concept of "world literature" into truly "global literature". The positive side of the influence of globalization in fiction is the further development of trans-cultural sensibility. This leads to the changes of the very field, subject and methodology of literary studies and literature as an institution, to the creation of the trans-disciplinary model of philology, positioned at the borders and crossroads of various theoretical discourses.

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Reconsideración de la Historia literaria comparada

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La renovación heurística y metodológica de la Historia literaria comparada (HLC) se ha fundamentado en los últimos años en tres determinaciones claras que alcanzan importantes repercusiones en aspectos discursivos y en la organización de las propuestas historiográficas concretas. Esas tres determinaciones pueden ser descritas en los siguientes términos: 1) abandono de la comprensión de la HLC como "historia de historias", 2) compromiso para que las literaturas nacionales dejen de seguir constituyendo el referente principal o privativo de la disciplina y 3) desplazamiento del criterio de *localización única* de las literaturas nacionales y del resto de unidades/pluralidades contempladas en favor de una consideración no organicista de las relaciones interculturales. Esto último implica la refutación del *principio de la totalidad orgánica*, por el cual se ha interpretado a menudo en términos de subsidiariedad geocultural la correlación entre totalidades "más o menos compactas" y partes "más o menos discretas". Ni la HLC se puede reducir a una suma selectiva de realidades parciales ni estas son siempre explicables como proyección local de fenómenos regionales o supuestamente universales. Las relaciones interliterarias constituyen un fenómeno complejo que no queda descrito a partir de simples lecturas sectoriales relativas a proximidades o afinidades de tipo lingüístico, étnico, administrativo o de otra índole. Por otra parte, las fronteras culturales y lingüísticas no siempre impiden la irradiación de influencias o transferencias literarias. De hecho, convendría entenderlas, en sentido lotmaniano, como zonas propicias al flujo e intercambio de modelos y repertorios. Al margen de ello, el principio de la totalidad orgánica se sustenta en una utilización abusiva de agrupaciones geoculturales derivadas de lo

que Walter Mignolo (2003: 9) ha analizado como "cartografía geo-histórica de la modernidad occidental", conducente no pocas veces a simplificaciones o distorsiones ante las que la HLC debe precaverse.

Una cuestión de fondo contra la que vienen reaccionando los nuevos modelos comparatistas desde hace tiempo es la del esencialismo asociado a claves identitarias, afectadas con frecuencia por una propensión teleológica (Hutcheon 2002, Cabo Aseguinolaza 2003) o por una dependencia excesiva de la circunstancia histórica (Greenblatt 2002). La HLC prevé así fenómenos como el de la inducción de fortalecimientos identitarios asociados a alguna clase de planificación político-cultural. E igualmente advierte sobre estrategias promotoras de cohesiones *forzadas* de índole ideológica, religiosa, comercial, cultural..., destinadas al logro de una minoración de la pluralidad identitaria y de las identidades mestizas tanto en marcos nacionales como internacionales.

Para los modelos de renovación de la HLC que vamos a analizar la concreción apriorística de qué sea o pueda funcionar como *todo* o como *parte* dista de constituirse en objetivo heurístico fundamental. Los cuatro modelos que someteremos a esquema destacan su distancia con respecto a tendencias historiográficas de marca teleológica y también con las inercias disciplinares que obstaculizan la asimilación mínima de ciertas premisas *posnacionales*. Se alejan así, en principio, de las pautas que Klaus Scherpe describió como propias de la Historia literaria tradicional en tanto *ciencia legitimadora*. Pero conviene destacar, de entrada, que su grado de desarrollo metodológico es bastante diferente a efectos de una aplicación directa al ámbito de una historiografía comparada. Es más, de los cuatro modelos-marco[1] probablemente sólo uno, el que aquí se presentará en segundo lugar, mantiene un nivel de confianza epistemológica *decidido* en relación con las prácticas discursivas historiográficas y más en concreto histórico-comparadas; mientras que los otros tres propenderían preferiblemente a organizar los resultados de sus investigaciones en un sentido alternativo, claramente diferenciado de lo que son los usos corrientes de la Historia literaria como disciplina académica.

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[1] Por la pluralidad interna de los cuatro modelos — asociados con la Escuela de Bratislava, el comité de HLC de la ICLA a partir de la presidencia de Mario J. Valdés, las teorías empírico-sistémicas y los estudios sobre la subalternidad — resulta apropiado hacer uso de la etiqueta más flexible de *modelos-marco*.

Cada uno de los cuatro modelos posee, por descontado, sus propias bases metodológicas y sus determinaciones heurísticas, pero no hay duda sobre la coincidencia parcial en algunas preocupaciones y asimismo en ciertos objetivos no secundarios, en general superadores de los horizontes disciplinares que marcaron el curso de la investigación histórico-comparada hasta hace poco, quizás un cuarto de siglo. Esos horizontes se desentendieron con alguna frecuencia de los motivos históricos, sociales y económicos que puedan existir detrás de factores compartidos como la lengua, los trayectos históricos, los substratos culturales o religiosos, los vínculos coloniales o poscoloniales, una red común de mercado y consumo de bienes culturales u otros. Tendieron a ignorar, incluso, las distintas posiciones que en función de la dinámica histórica corresponden a los espacios objeto de la comparación (piénsese como ejemplo en el eje colonizador-colonizado) y otras condiciones traídas a primera línea por el Nuevo Historicismo y otras plataformas teóricas en el contexto de la larga crisis de la Historia literaria. Entre ellas, la que gira en torno a la *textualidad* de la historia.

Los cuatro modelos-marco que veremos comparten la vocación de no limitar su proyección a áreas geográficas, culturales o lingüísticas predefinidas como objeto de atención en la tradición comparatista canónica, en alguna medida refutada por las nuevas prácticas. Este es un dato relevante porque propicia la posibilidad de configurar referentes de estudio no cerrados en un sentido identitario, incluidos los definidos por una condición fronteriza e inestable. En los dos últimos decenios del siglo XX asistimos además a una seria impugnación del eurocentrismo y a una apertura de horizontes que convive mal con jerarquizaciónes interliterarias antes legitimadas o consentidas. Desde esta perspectiva, que otorga otro peso específico al par identidad/alteridad y en definitiva a la *diferencia*, un mismo espacio geocultural puede ser incorporado alternativamente a marcos distintos en función del punto de vista escogido, sin que tal decisión condicione en sentido negativo el rigor o la aceptabilidad heurística de la propuesta.

Sin embargo, el designio de trascender las coordenadas habituales del análisis comparado, juzgadas hoy como claramente insuficientes, y esa convergencia relativa a la hora de identificar problemas y alternativas metodológicas no significan que exista un debate de fondo entre las cuatro posiciones teóricas aquí destacadas. Por esto mismo

parece oportuno detenerse en una exploración sobre la posible congruencia de sus presupuestos y objetivos, así como progresar en una evaluación crítica de los programas de investigación asociados y en la específica comprensión del comparatismo postulada en cada caso. A este respecto sería dudosa la aplicabilidad a nuestro campo de intereses de la polarización trazada recientemente por el teórico esloveno Tomo Virk (2003) entre un comparatismo *contextualista*, básicamente el abierto a los Estudios culturales, a los Estudios poscoloniales, a los *Gender Studies*, a la Traductología, a los *Media Studies*...[2], y otro *no contextualista*, identificable con una simple puesta al día de la tradición comparatista, en la que la literatura seguiría siendo el objeto principal de los análisis y la Literatura comparada preservaría su plena autonomía epistemológica. Sin entrar a evaluar esta clase de juicios, sí interesa adelantar que ninguno de los cuatro modelos que aquí vamos a atender queda al margen de una consideración flexible y dinámica en la determinación del objeto de estudio de la HLC.

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El prímero de los cuatro modelos es el de Dionýz Ďurišin, eslavista especializado en las relaciones literarias ruso-eslovacas. De sus vínculos teórico-comparatistas ha informado con detalle el propio Ďurišin (1984: 11–53). Apuntan hacia la proyección comparada de la eslavística del siglo XIX, la Poética histórica de Alexander Veselovski, la ampliación de ciertas claves del formalismo ruso y del estructuralismo checo y también hacia los caminos explorados por el comparatismo ruso de procedencia formalista y por el comparatismo eslovaco durante el período de entreguerras. Las confluencias pasan igualmente de modo destacado por los retos de la Traductología contemporánea. Pero tanta importancia como todo ello la ha tenido para Ďurišin y los teóricos de Bratislava la distancia marcada con el comparatismo positivista, así como el seguimiento de la crísis vivida por el comparatismo académico occidental en los años cincuenta y sesenta del pasado siglo. La fundación en 1964 del Instituto de Literatura Mundial en Bratislava y los trabajos que Ďurišin comenzó a

[2] En su valoración, casi un desarrollo práctico de las líneas previstas en el *Bernheimer Report*, que desembocaron en comprensiones como la presentada en el libro *Death of a Discipline* (2003), de Gayatri C. Spivak.

publicar poco después favorecieron la investigación en dos terrenos principales, las leyes del proceso interliterario y la dinámica de las comunidades interliterarias, a menudo desde una óptica supranacional en la que inequívocamente alienta la intención de superar la Historia literaria como disciplina.

Otra ampliación epistemológica importante que subyace a ese cometido es la que Miloš Zelenka (en Ďurišin y Gnisci 2000: 89–99) plasmó en la idea de ordenar el campo de la Literatura comparada en dos subsectores, uno equiparado a la comparatística clásica y el otro presentado como una disciplina nueva, centrada en el funcionamiento de las relaciones interliterarias y localizada en un ámbito fronterizo entre la Teoría literaria, la Lingüística, la Estética, la Culturología, la Etnografía, la Folclorística, la Economía y la Geografía política. Se trata de una apertura consecuente con el establecimiento de los factores históricos determinantes de las comunidades interliterarias, que para Ďurišin son el étnico, el lingüístico, el geográfico, el político-ideológico y el administrativo. En este orden de cosas, puede afirmarse que la atención a los desarrollos geoculturales de la interliterariedad converge con la atención que desde los Estudios poscoloniales y sobre la subalternidad se concede a esa misma esfera de problemas. En la última fase de su producción teórica, Ďurišin estaba muy pendiente de esta clase de análisis, por lo que promovió entre sus colaboradores el estudio sobre las *condiciones de la subordinación extraliteraria*, también centrales en los trabajos recientes de Armando Gnisci y en su concepción de la Historia literaria (Gnisci 2001).

Todo lo anterior comporta una secundarización de las literaturas nacionales y del resto de unidades históricas de los procesos literarios nacionales. Y también, sin duda, la concesión de prioridad a las efectivas unidades históricas del proceso interliterario, que para Ďurišin serían las cuatro siguientes: las *comunidades interliterarias de tipo estándar* — conglomerados supranacionales y supraétnicos con una coexistencia histórica continuada que se fundamenta en la convergencia de los factores determinantes antes indicados —, las *comunidades interliterarias específicas* — marcadas por una interacción evolutiva especialmente intensa o cohesiva —, los *centrismos interliterarios* — ámbitos más amplios vinculados a determinaciones geográficas de gran escala, como las continentales — y la *literatura mundial*. Es importante destacar que para los teóricos de Bratislava

ninguna de estas unidades constituye una manifestación invariable. Todas ellas, incluidas las literaturas nacionales y la literatura mundial, aparecen formuladas como conceptos multiformes y cambiantes. Todas están sujetas a variaciones y a reformulaciones, a una dialéctica de integración/desintegración que puede llegar a suponer incluso su desaparición como unidades históricas o su relocalización en un marco diferente. Así, por ejemplo, una literatura nacional puede formar parte de distintas comunidades interliterarias en diversos momentos históricos.

Se trata de procesos de reagrupamiento regional en relación con los cuales los comparatistas de Bratislava reconocen no haber culminado un núcleo de hipótesis plenamente satisfactorio. Tal vez por la propia multiplicación de trabajos y de proyecciones en zonas geoculturales diversas, el cuerpo conceptual de la Escuela se muestra a día de hoy algo disperso e incluso impreciso, como el propio Ďurišin (1993: 11–12 e 83) reconoció en el momento de presentar un glosario orgánico con sus propuestas principales. Una de las debilidades de este programa de investigación podría provenir de su ambición, dirigida a alcanzar una nueva consideración de la literatura mundial, que pasaría a ser entendida sencillamente como la comunidad interliteraria más amplia. Ante la demanda de precisión sobre los fenómenos literarios que pertenecerían a la literatura mundial, Ďurišin solía referirse a aquellos que construyen un sistema estructurado de tendencias evolutivas en el proceso interliterario, de modo que ellos mismos resultan condicionados genética y tipológicamente a través de la red de vínculos recíprocos (ib. 29). Está fuera de duda que tal clase de perspectiva favorece la superación de una concepción sólo textualista o apenas factualista-comparatista en sentido tradicional, pero también es cierto que Ďurišin pudo situarse con ella en un territorio tal vez equidistante entre la *Weltliteratur* goethiana y las conocidas rectificaciones promovidas por Étiemble y por las lecturas *poscomparatistas* del espacio literario mundial (*cfr.* Gálik 2000, Moretti 2000, Sinopoli 2002).

El segundo de los modelos-marco es el auspiciado a partir de los años noventa por Mario J. Valdés junto con otros profesores de la Universidad de Toronto, en especial Linda Hutcheon. Una primera determinación de premisas y objetivos, acompañada de una planificación de líneas de aplicación específica, apareció en la breve exposición *Rethinking Literary History — Comparatively* (Valdés y

Hutcheon 1994). Es perceptible en este texto una conciencia clara sobre la necesidad improrrogable de avalar la renovación disciplinar y también de alcanzar cuanto antes, por parte de equipos diversificados pero coordinados de investigadores, resultados concretos capaces de dotar de vigor una nueva historiografía superadora de las viejas nociones de lo *literario*. Es en este sentido en el que se reclama una apertura del concepto de *literatura* para acoger en él producciones orales, populares, no ficcionales o, en general, discriminadas por las comprensiones elitistas y normativas que vertebraron el discurso historiográfico-literario de índole nacional o supranacional desde finales del siglo XVIII. Frente a ello, la *Historia cultural comparada* es entendida por parte de Valdés y Hutcheon como el estudio de la producción y la recepción del imaginario cultural en contextos sociales específicos, que deberían ser descritos separadamente de cualquier narración de acontecimientos. Esta nueva vía tendría que prestar atención especial a las condiciones institucionales de funcionamiento de la cultura, así como a las coordenadas espirituales y materiales de diverso signo (demográfico, geográfico, lingüístico, económico, sociológico, tecnológico, antropológico, religioso...) que condicionan la labor de los agentes culturales.

La cuestión de la narratividad de la historiografía en tanto modalidad y práctica discursiva constituye para Valdés uno de los asuntos principales de debate. Muy receptivo a la hermenéutica de Paul Ricoeur y a la aplicación de nociones procedentes de Hans-Georg Gadamer, sobre todo la de *historia efectual*, procura en cualquier caso Valdés el reingreso de la Historia literaria en el campo de las disciplinas propiamente historiográficas. Los historiadores han sido de forma tradicional los *mediadores* entre los acontecimientos históricos y una cierta experiencia de la temporalidad por parte de las comunidades estudiadas. Su labor originó así a menudo, según recuerda Valdés, un entramado argumental y acumulativo de sucesos históricos en forma de inventario o registro, destinado a disponer un significado simbólico para tales sucesos una vez incorporados a un índice de acciones organizadas discursivamente con un determinado *sentido* (Valdés 1999: 13). Contra esa clase de prácticas, presentes y aun canónicas en el terreno historiográfico-literario, la perspectiva de Valdés aspiraría a la *sustitución* de la narratividad por un estudio ajeno a la ordenación teleológica de datos empírico-positivos. En ella ocupa un primer plano la comprensión del pasado como un fondo

permanentemente *reconstruido*, por lo que la capital cuestión de la periodización literario-cultural evitaría igualmente la subsidiariedad factualista-positivista. Y lo haría además con la finalidad expresa de otorgar preeminencia a los procesos dinámicos de recepción, no lejos de las recomendaciones de Fernand Braudel. Ello limitaría, según Valdés, la *autoridad narrativa explicativo-causal* del historiador; y reconduciría, en sentido alternativo, la *clausura* propia de todo discurso historiográfico. Se instauraría de ese modo, antes al contrario, una historiografía *abierta*, dialéctica, no conclusiva, comparable con los hipertextos que a través de enlaces reenvían a otros hipertextos de la red. Se asume, pues, por Valdés el reto de localizar un concepto posfoucaultiano y posmoderno de la Historia en el que el diálogo con otras lecturas de los acontecimientos históricos y con los *efectos* posteriores de esas lecturas ocuparía un lugar heurístico principalísimo (Valdés 2002: 76–80). Otra asunción epistemológica importante es la de la naturaleza multidisciplinar de la Historia, en términos próximos a los que defendió el propio Braudel, e incluso al giro crítico representado por la escuela de *Annales*, pero con tendencia no tanto a la *totalidad* como a la *multiplicidad*. El diálogo con el conjunto de las ciencias sociales cobra en consecuencia una dimensión muy reforzada, si bien Valdés demanda que ese diálogo no renuncie a considerar el *espacio hermenéutico de la experiencia*, en el que el historiador se mueve, ante todo como sujeto problematizador de su labor y de su discurso final — "*a creative tension of inquiry*" —, en una red franca configurada por las historias y *contrahistorias* previas y por los horizontes de expectativas generados[3].

La concreción metodológica de estos presupuestos ha alcanzado una importante proyección a través del Coordinating Committee for Comparative Literary History de la International Comparative Literature Association[4], con un decidido impulso de la concepción abierta y rizomática del discurso historiográfico, manifiesta en esquemas nodales relativamente próximos a los explorados por Denis Hollier (1989), pero que prueban su funcionalidad con referentes no sólo cronológicos sino también topográficos (una ciudad multicultural,

[3] Aquí es capital la guía teórica de Paul Ricoeur y su propio debate con Reinhart Koselleck en capítulos como el séptimo del tercer volumen de *Temps et récit* (Ricoeur 1985: III, 300–346).

[4] Constituyen ejemplos recientes Cornis-Pope y Neubauer (2004) y Valdés y Kadir (2004).

el curso de un río que atraviesa varios países...), institucionales (determinada academia o revista) y figurativos (héroes o personajes de ficción representativos de una cierta sensibilidad nacional/regional/local). Según señala Valdés, los desarrollos culturales originados a partir de un nodo determinado pueden verse como una alternativa que modifica el orden interno de una cultura literaria y dan paso a alguna forma de *interferencia*. De manera que la base epistemológica para la historia efectual que se persigue debería integrar la comprensión de las tensiones, cambios y transformaciones del mundo cultural y del sistema de bienes simbólicos sobre el que se pretende informar (Valdés 2002: 69–73). En estos esquemas obtiene mayor protagonismo la cohesión lingüística o la delimitación de grandes áreas geográficas que la identificación de espacios nacionales, leídos estos en todo caso como *comunidades imaginarias* en los sentidos determinados por Eric Hobsbawm o Benedict Anderson.

El tercer modelo-marco tiene unas bases algo menos definidas y más plurales que los dos anteriores. Comprenden desde la perspectiva formalista de la evolución literaria tal como fue formulada por Tinianov y Jakobson hasta la semiótica de la cultura lotmaniana y ciertas propuestas del materialismo cultural, ampliadas en la fase final del siglo XX por la recepción de la teoria de la acción comunicativa de Jürgen Habermas, del constructivismo radical de Humberto Maturana y de la teoría de los campos sociales de Pierre Bourdieu. El modelo comenzó a formularse a finales de los años setenta, pero fue también en torno al fin de siglo cuando incrementó su proyección internacional, sobre todo tras la repercusión alcanzada por la teoría de los polisistemas de Itamar Even-Zohar y el propio reconocimiento de la tradición teórica identificada como "funcionalismo dinámico". En un primer momento el modelo se corresponde con la ampliación de los postulados sistémicos de Talcott Parsons por parte de la Teoría estructural-funcional desarrollada en la Universidad de Múnich y también con las propuestas de la Teoría empírica de Siegfried J. Schmidt y el Grupo NIKOL.

Maldonado Alemán (1999) ha señalado como momento clave en relación con la reorientación de la Historia literaria el de la renuncia, por parte de los discípulos de Hans R. Jauss, a dar continuidad a los esquemas reconstructivos del horizonte de expectativas como fundamento de la disciplina. También resultó determinante la investigación sobre las aplicaciones de la teoría de los campos sociales de Niklaus

Luhmann. Hacer Historia literaria desde esta óptica supone otorgar todo el protagonismo a la evolución y a los cambios dentro del sistema literario, con una triple dimensión en la que el peso específico recae siempre en los elementos estructurales-funcionales[5] y que analiza sucesivamente las relaciones intrasistémicas, extrasistémicas e intersistémicas (Maldonado Alemán 1999: 275). Estas últimas serían por supuesto las de mayor interés para una ampliación comparada de la Historia literaria, que a esa luz tendría un objetivo fundamental: comparar las dinámicas evolutivas de un grupo determinado de sistemas literarios. Siegfried J. Schmidt, para quien la Historia literaria carecería de autonomía como disciplina en el ámbito de la Teoría empírica por corresponderse básicamente con su componente diacrónico, entendió como una de las cinco cuestiones principales relativas a la labor historiográfico-literaria la decisión sobre el ámbito de intervención — regional, nacional o internacional (Schmidt 1995: 249) —, pero no parece que haya experimentado un interés especial por indagar en el último de ellos.

Tampoco ha facilitado los avances en el terreno histórico-comparado la ambigua vocación comparatista del modelo teórico de la Escuela de Tel Aviv, cuando menos en sus primeras formulaciones, más atentas al hecho literario y aún no, como ocurriría tras la consolidación de la Unidad para la Investigación Cultural, a la heterogeneidad cultural, al conflicto asociado a las dinámicas repertoriales y a las diversas manifestaciones de lo que en terminología bourdiana denominaríamos *concurrencia* (Even-Zohar 1999). Pese a la proximidad nominativa con los *Cultural Studies*, algo que destacan con reiteración los miembros del grupo de Tel Aviv es que la *culture research* tiene su propio campo de intervención y su específica tradición epistemológica. En lo que afecta a las actualizaciones de puntos de vista teóricos y a la determinación de nuevos objetos preferentes de estudio, es igualmente notable la insistencia de Even-Zohar, a partir de 1993, en su desinterés progresivo por el análisis del fenómeno literario en sí mismo, o incluso por las relaciones interliterarias contempladas desde un punto de vista en algún sentido *comparado*. Cuando se habla de este comparatismo (literario) indeciso — siempre pendiente sin embargo del registro de las

[5] Entre los seguidores más próximos a Luhmann, la vía propiciada se orientó hacia una sociología del sistema de la literatura.

transferencias y de su incidencia en la constitución de los repertorios en lucha — estamos en realidad ante una peculiaridad compartida por la totalidad de las plataformas asociadas en el tercero de nuestros modelos-marco. En este sentido, debe reconocerse la excepcionalidad *cronológica* de propuestas como las reunidas por Claudio Guillén en *Literature as System*, volumen compilatorio publicado en 1971.

En países como Bélgica o Canadá, entre otros motivos por el carácter plurilingüe y multicultural de sus sociedades y por el impulso institucional en favor de la construcción de identidades nacionales más sólidas, se han desarrollado interesantes ampliaciones de los presupuestos metodológicos sistémicos por parte de teóricos como José Lambert o Clément Moisan; así como por el Centre de Recherche Interuniversitaire sur la Littérature et la Culture Québécoises (CRILCQ), formado básicamente por profesores de las Universidades Laval y de Montreal; o por parte de Milan V. Dimić y otros investigadores relacionados con el M.V. Dimić Research Institute for Comparative Literary and Cultural Studies de la Universidad de Alberta; o, en fin, por Steven Tötösy de Zepetnek, el teórico más representativo de la plataforma metodológica identificada como *The Systemic and Empirical Approach to Literature and Culture*. En todos estos casos la prioridad de los análisis ha recaído sobre la historia de la institución literaria en su específico contexto cultural, siendo el de Even-Zohar uno de los referentes teóricos más comúnmente solicitados y aplicados, en el caso del grupo CRILCQ con un soporte inicial establecido por Moisan (1987: 157–170) en Jacques Dubois y Pierre Bourdieu, pero también en Hans R. Jauss y Niklaus Luhmann.

Moisan ha propuesto aplicar la noción de *sistema* sobre dos dominios subsistémicos, identificados como *vida literaria* y *vida antropo-social*. El primero de ellos atendería aspectos como los temáticos, los genológicos o la recepción, y prestaría atención a la canonicidad entendida en el sentido contemplado por la Escuela de Tel Aviv. El segundo dominio estaría representado por los campos de la producción literaria y no literaria, la literatura como producto de difusión y de consumo en el marco de una determinada formación económica y social, el campo de legitimación y el campo de la enseñanza de la literatura. Comprende la vida antropo-social, por tanto, todos los discursos que tienen origen o soporte en las instituciones sociales, literarias o culturales. El referente teórico básico en este segundo dominio es la *Rezeptionästhetik*. La teoría de los

polisistemas interviene como elemento de refuerzo, aunque el método de trabajo esté dirigido al registro de la historia de las instituciones literarias y al estudio de la constitución diacrónica de las reglas, normas y códigos de producción, así como de los modos de difusión y recepción y de las instancias de reconocimiento y sanción de los productos literarios.

En el grupo de la Universidad de Alberta la teoría de los polisistemas se ha utilizado como fundamento principal del proyecto de constitución de una Historia de la institución literaria en Canadá, con un espacio para la específica determinación conceptual y heurística sobre lo que se entiende por *institución*. Milan V. Dimić (1989) ha señalado, entre las cuestiones pertinentes que deberían ser tratadas en ese marco, la determinación de la posición dinámica y cambiante de la literatura en los sistemas culturales y sociales, la fijación de los contactos e interferencias entre los sistemas literarios concurrentes (incluidos los minoritarios), la observación de la interacción entre modelos y repertorios en esos sistemas, el estudio de la posición jerárquica de los géneros literarios privilegiados y de los textos no canonizados, la determinación del lugar de los textos traducidos en la evolución de la literatura canonizada o, en fin, el registro de las diferentes intervenciones críticas y académico-pedagógicas.

Los *Comparative Cultural Studies* postulados por Tötösy de Zepetnek reconocen como propias las bases empírico-sistémicas. Asumen además los principios epistemológicos del constructivismo, así como el campo de intereses definido a lo largo de los últimos dos decenios por los Estudios culturales, contemplado este último claramente como marco óptimo para el fomento de la colaboración interdisciplinar (Tötösy de Zepetnek 2002: 235). Desde un punto de vista histórico-comparado, adquiere relevancia la receptividad de algunos de los fundamentos teóricos de la Escuela de Constanza, sobre todo el referido a la opción metodológica de articulación de una historiografía constituida como secuencia diacrónica de observaciones efectuadas con perspectiva sincrónica, pero en este caso con atención especial al modo en el que cada uno de los que Schmidt reconoció como cuatro *papeles de actuación* refleja la especificidad de los otros tres en una serie cronológica de momentos concretos preseleccionados. Tomando el término desde la geometría y la óptica, el teórico habla a este respecto de *reflexiones catacáusticas* (Tötösy de Zepetnek 1998: 46–

54) y deja anotada expresamente la viabilidad de una aplicación comparada de esa forma de hacer Historia literaria. Otro aspecto de interés es su comprensión dinámica de las áreas geopolíticas y de los espacios geoculturales (Tötosy de Zepetnek 2002), que por ejemplo lo lleva a postular para las culturas del centro y el este europeo en la etapa actual — así como, en sentido próximo, para producciones asociadas a fenómenos migratorios, diásporas o minorías étnicas (Tötosy de Zepetnek 2000) — la triple marca de *periféricas* respecto de las culturas dominantes en el marco continental, *poscoloniales* respecto a su pasada dependencia de la órbita soviética e *in-between*[6] por la simultaneidad de una condición híbrida de extrema receptividad a los influjos exteriores y de autorreferencialidad cultural en relación con el respectivo espacio nacional[7] (*in-between peripherality*).

El cuarto y último modelo del que aquí se hablará está ligado en sentido amplio con los *Subaltern Studies*, tanto en sus formulaciones iniciales según se plasmaron a partir de los años 80 en la India por parte de Gayatri Spivak, Ranajit Guha o Partha Chatterjee — con la controversia sobre la posibilidad de recuperación de la *voz* del subalterno, de la restauración de su *conciencia suprimida* — como en la orientación propugnada por Walter D. Mignolo en relación con el ámbito latinoamericano. Existen obvias conexiones con las posiciones de Edouard Glissant o Edward Said y con el debate Jameson/Ahmad sobre la supuesta condición alegórico-nacional de toda literatura del Tercer Mundo. También con ciertas revisiones feministas, deconstruccionistas y poscoloniales orientadas a unos posibles *Transnational Cultural Studies* (Spivak 1999), o con una serie de postulados marxistas, en particular en sus reelaboraciones gramscianas o en la línea del materialismo cultural británico (González-Millán 2000). Y, no menos, con las teorías sociológicas de los sistemas-mundo tal como se vienen desarrollando por parte de Immanuel Wallerstein desde 1974. Otro caudal importante que se suma a esta corriente es el de la teoría de los discursos sociales, por donde reaparece la influencia de Pierre Bourdieu y la de algunos de sus lectores críticos, como Bridget Fowler o Craig Calhoun. Interesa destacar que el ámbito de

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[6] Entendido este último calificativo en el sentido determinado por Homi Bhabha (1994).

[7] Para una aplicación historiográfico-comparada de los estudios imagológicos, también proclives a la incorporación de formulaciones sociológicas o sistémicas, véanse Leerssen (2000) y Pageaux (2002).

aplicación de este modelo-marco trasciende al mundo descolonizado o neocolonizado y alcanza de hecho al llamado Primer Mundo, a menudo con el propósito de fundamentar un nuevo humanismo atento al fenómeno imperialista y a la mundialización económica y cultural. Así lo han explicado Gnisci (en Ďurišin y Gnisci 2000: 41–46) o Mignolo (2002), entre otros.

Una peculiaridad importante de los *Subaltern Studies* es que nacieron justamente en el marco del debate sobre el papel de las disciplinas historiográficas y la noción/función del canon en espacios colonizados. En esa línea, Walter Mignolo viene propugnando una descolonización de la Historia literaria, que comenzaría por el cuestionamiento de las nociones de *historia* y *literatura* en tanto discursos o realidades universales — "Literature and History are Western categories to name, describe, and classify certain Western practices and, by the same token, to fabricate the colonial difference" (Mignolo 2002: 157) — y que asumiría un *border thinking* entendido como consecuencia lógica de lo analizado como *la diferencia colonial*. Esta debería convertirse en el objeto básico de una nueva Historia literaria reformulada como *estudio de las culturas literarias en la historia* y de una también nueva comprensión del eje literatura-historia-historiografía literaria que integrase la aspiración no sólo a hablar/pensar *sobre* tal diferencia sino la de hablar/pensar *desde* ella. Según se recoge entre otros lugares en las páginas prologales de su libro *Historias locales / diseños globales* (2003), para Mignolo la *variedad de experiencias e historias coloniales* ha sufrido a menudo una vinculación restrictiva al sistema-mundo de la modernidad, desde donde aquellas experiencias e historias se intentaron explicar y limitar por generalización. Tal programa supuso abstraerse de las marcas de la *colonialidad* y la *diversalidad*, axialmente constitutivas de lo anunciado por el teórico como un "paradigma otro" surgido desde los márgenes y que se fijaría como meta la emancipación y la descolonización. Mignolo (2002) formula en ese sentido una revisión crítica que resituaría en términos epistemológicos las alternativas histórico-literarias concurrentes, entre ellas las representadas por dos modelos con los que marca distancias, el *nacional* y el *discursivo*. Dentro del primero llama aun la atención sobre la persistencia — incluso en los usos comparatistas canónicos — de una *diferencia imperial* jerarquizadora del peso específico de determinados espacios culturales nacionales a partir de una asignación que, en realidad,

tendría que ver con el reparto del poder y la hegemonía económica perfilado desde el siglo XVIII. Por otra parte, engloba dentro del *modelo discursivo* tanto la opción hermenéutica de Valdés[8] como una línea más ceñida al análisis discursivo en sentido estricto, esta última sin la apertura geohistórica ni la marca pluralista y posmoderna de las propuestas definidoras de la Historia cultural comparada.

El empleo por Mignolo de la noción de *sistema-mundo* remite a Immanuel Wallerstein, si bien debe precisarse que opera con flexibilidad y que tiene asimismo muy presentes análisis como los debidos a Janet Abu-Lughod, Giovanni Arrighi, Samuel Huntington, Aníbal Quijano, Enrique Dussel u otros. En el apartado cuarto de la extensa introducción a *Historias locales / diseños globales*, titulada "Acerca de la gnosis y el imaginario del sistema-mundo moderno/colonial", expuso Mignolo los motivos por los que sus análisis no deberían contemplarse como una continuación de las investigaciones poscoloniales o sobre la subalternidad, asentadas en comprensiones de la modernidad que sitúan en la Ilustración un punto de partida indiscutido. Y explora además las razones por las que las concepciones de Wallerstein no han dejado hasta ahora una influencia apreciable en el marco de los saberes humanísticos (Mignolo 2002: 78–83). La principal de ellas residiría precisamente en el traslado por Wallerstein del punto de inflexión histórica al siglo XVIII en vez de situarlo en el siglo XVI. Mignolo propone distinguir el período abierto en el siglo XVI como *sistema-mundo moderno/colonial*, por cuanto occidentalismo y colonialismo serían respectivamente las caras visible y oculta de la modernidad. Los "conocimientos subalternos" de la colonialidad se opondrían así a los "diseños globales" hegemónicos y demandarían en fin macronarrativas constituidas desde la perspectiva de la colonialidad, entre ellas las referidas a las prácticas culturales o literarias. Merece ser destacada la insistencia de Mignolo en que esas nuevas macronarrativas — en realidad, una red de historias y hegemonías locales múltiples — no constituyen una "contraparte de la historia mundial o universal" ni se configuran como ejercicios historiográficos revisionistas caracterizados aún por la pauta de lo *global*, sino como productos de una lógica diferente tendente a sustituir el "universalismo abstracto" de la epistemología moderna y

[8] Véanse también las consideraciones del propio Valdés en relación con lo postulado por Mignolo en su revisión crítica de las prácticas historiográficas occidentalistas (Valdés 2002: 97–102).

de la historia mundial por una gnoseología emergente de carácter fronterizo en la que la modernidad no se entiende nunca sin el contrapunto de la colonialidad.

No todos los modelos introducidos en las páginas precedentes conforman primordial o inicialmente plataformas teóricas para la constitución de Historias comparadas. Resulta asimismo evidente que su grado de aplicabilidad potencial a espacios geoculturales diversos está marcado por una variabilidad en la que se conjugan numerosos parámetros, varios de ellos no mencionados en esta exposición. Algunos de los modelos, sobre todo los dos últimos, incorporan el prisma comparado sólo en cuanto resulta necesario para la concreción de fenómenos de dependencia sistémica, de resistencia cultural o de hibridación. Tampoco hay coincidencia en la propensión más teorética o más descriptiva de los fundamentos epistemológicos, que *a priori* origina respectivamente análisis de tendencia interpretativa (modelos segundo y cuarto) o explicativa (modelos primero y tercero), esta última sin renuncia a la aspiración de formular leyes. De todas formas, los cuatro modelos-marco representan una refutación de la Historia literaria convencional y suponen una alternativa sólida para fundamentar con rigor la necesaria renovación de la HLC en los inicios del nuevo siglo, situándola además en el marco general de superación de los viejos paradigmas que lastran un desarrollo más dinámico de las Ciencias sociales y humanísticas.

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Anthropophagy, or the (Masculine) Obsession with Origin(al)s

ASSUMPTA CAMPS

"Se o poeta é um fingidor, como queria
Fernando Pessoa, o tradutor é um transfingidor"

(Haroldo de Campos,
Tradução e reconfiguração do imaginário).

1. "Traduttore-traditore"

Before discussing translation we must first place it in context, since its meaning has undergone several changes over the centuries. What do we understand by translation? In particular, what do we mean by literary translation? And what do we understand by a "good translation"? The notion of translation applied to the literary context began to take shape in France and England during the Baroque period, between 1620 and 1650. At this time some translators started to consider literary translation as a distinct category, that is, a type of translation that alters the traditional dependency between the original and the translated text, subverting the primacy of the author or authorship which until that time had been unquestioned. Indeed the discourse on translation of the Renaissance period moved back and forth between a pedagogical approach designed to teach grammar through translation and centred mainly on philosophical works, and an attempt to produce an *imitatio* of classical rhetoric centred for the most part on literature. In both cases, but especially in the former, the relationship between translation and original text, and the translator and author (or *auctoritas*) is characterized by a clear dependence of the former on the

latter; indeed, in the discourse of the period translation is presented as the unearthing of the hidden treasures of tradition. This strongly hierarchical position reflects not only the reverence of the Humanists for classical tradition but also the subordination and inferiority of the copy (translation) towards the original text. Although the Renaissance *imitatio* had already paved the way for a new approach to literary translation, the translation discourse of the sixteenth century was still dominated by the notion of fidelity and respect for the original text, somewhere between *ad verbum* and *ad sensum* translation.

As we noted at the beginning, this approach began to change in the first half of the seventeenth century. At this time there was a radical reappraisal of the relation between the original text and translation which aimed to raise the profile of translation and rescue it from centuries of subordination. There are many examples of this trend: Antoine Godeau's *Discours sur Malherbe* (1630), Nicolas Perrot d'Ablancourt's preface to Thucydides (1662), Chapman's translation of Homer, John Denham's preface to the *Destruction of Troy* (1655), or the Earl of Roscommon's *Essay on Translated Verse* (1684). (Hermans 1993). As Denham affirms in his preface:

> ...it is not [the translator's] business alone to translate Language into Language, but Poesie into Poesie; and Poesie is of so subtle a spirit, that in pouring out of one Language into another, it will all evaporate; and if a new Spirit be not added in the transfusion, there will remain nothing but a *Caput mortuum*...[1]

Curiously, in many cases those that described this important change referred to the theories of Pythagoras, or to alchemy: for example, speaking of transfusion to indicate that translation is a process of transmutation of the initial poetic "spirit" into a different language. D'Ablancourt himself referred to metempsychosis to explain the process, highlighting the need for empathy between author and translator, especially in the translation of poetry. This change of attitude towards the status of literary translation was accompanied by the rejection of an excessively restrictive definition of translation as a merely pedagogical activity. The idea that the translation should preserve the eloquence and poetic qualities of the original — something that an excessively faithful translation is unlikely to do —

[1] Quoted by Steiner 1975: 65.

began to gain ground. For instance, Edward Sherburne referred to "paraphrase" rather than translation (1648); Abraham Cowley defended "a libertine way of rendering foreign Authors" (1656); Nicolas Perrot D'Ablancourt affirmed without hesitation that his *Lucian* was not a translation, but "something much better than a translation": "a different work". So the translator ceased to be considered as a mere interpreter, and acquired the status of author for the first time.

In more recent times the crisis of the concept of author or authorship intensified with the emergence of post-structuralist criticism. The author was no longer considered a creator, but a (re)interpreter of intertextual moments preceding the (original) text; similarly, the concept of author or authorship acquired a multipersonal dimension, since, to quote Harold Bloom, the text is never created *ex nihilo*. Foucault even suggested that the author or authorship be considered as a mere textual function created by the text itself, neither preceding it nor locatable beyond it, that is, as an ideologically and historically connoted figure that conditions the text's reading and reception. In any case, the transformation in the notion of author or authorship had a direct effect on translation, its status, and the discourse on the subject in its present form. Whether we consider translation as a manipulation (never neutral) and a construction operated on the meaning of an original text (Bassnett), as a decoding of its multiple, erratic meanings (Derrida), or as a fragment revealing in turn the fragmentary nature of all original texts, destabilizing and breaking up the original text itself and its language (Paul de Man), we are forced to examine and reassess the relationship between the role of the translator and the author — which may be one of affinity, proximity, or antagonism — so as to redefine the ontological status of translation and its traditionally subordinate position, which has come down to us as a "natural" inheritance.

One of the recent translation schools which has had a major influence in this area is the Brazilian school, which evolved during the second half of the twentieth century thanks to the work of Oswald de Andrade and Haroldo and Augusto de Campos, among others. The most interesting aspect of the Brazilian position on translation is its firm commitment to the translator's complete visibility, that is, the idea of translation as a (re)creation or (re)writing or, to use Haroldo de Campos' own term, as "transcreation". One of main concerns in de

Campos' early works on translation (on literary translation and, especially, on the translation of poetry) was to attempt to unite the translation theories of Jakobson and Walter Benjamin. In order to do so, de Campos undertook what he called a laicization of Benjamin's adamic positions on translation, reinterpreting Benjamin's notion of "Pure Language" (*die reine Sprache*) via Jakobson's notion of "poetic function": that is, understanding *reine Sprache* as a semiotic or operating space in poetic translation that the original text and its translations share. Hence, de Campos's writings refer to translation (especially the translation of poetry) as a "semiotic operation", from a dual viewpoint: **1)** as a special semiotic practice, or to put it in his own terms, "reconfiguração do 'intracódigo' que opera na poesia de todas as línguas como um 'universal poético'" (De Campos 1987), that is, as a "heuristic fiction"; and **2)** as a critical operation, because all traditions are re-proposed and reformulated through translation. (De Campos 1981: esp. 73–76).

In the first of these senses, de Campos' "intracode" corresponds to Benjamin's notion of "pure language". For Benjamin, the task of the translator includes a mission of salvation, since he must free this "pure language", which is banished (*gebannt*) in the foreign language, and rescue it for his own language through a process of "transpoetization" (*Umdichtung*), accomplished through a "*remissão*" (*Erlösung),* as Campos terms it, of the "*manera d'intencionar*", that is, the "way of signifying", understood as a "way of representing" (*Darstellungs-modus*) the original in the translator's language. This process must not be confused with referential translation, or the simple restitution of meaning (*Sinnwiedergabe*), which simply aspires to transmit the contents or message of the original text. Quite the contrary: for Benjamin, and also for Haroldo de Campos, poetic translation (and by extension, literary translation) should not only aim to communicate meaning, for this would be to betray the essence of its form, since all translation is but form (*Uebersetzung ist eine Form).* To quote de Campos: "a traduão desvela o desempenho [...] da função poética no poema de partida e transforma o resultado desse desvelamento em metalinguagem". (De Campos 1987: 183). So this is creative translation, or as we said above, a "transcreation":

> O tradutor [...] 'desbabeliza' o *stratum* semiótico das línguas interiorizado nos poemas, procedendo *como se* [...] esse 'intracódigo' de 'formas significantes' fosse

> intencional o tendencialmente común ao original e ao texto resultante da tradução. Ou seja, o tradutor constrói paralelamente (paramórficamente) ao original o texto de sua 'transcriação', depois de 'deconstruir' esse original num primeiro momento metalingüístico. A tradução opera, por tanto, graças a uma deslocação reconfiguradora, a projetada reconvergência das divergências, ao 'extraditar' o 'intracódigo' de uma para outra língua, *come se* na perseguição harmonizadora de um mesmo telos.[2]

This "reconfigurating dislocation", this "projected reconvergence of divergences" is what Benjamin defines as the operation of translation, which he terms *Anbildung* ("parafiguration"), in contrast to *Abbildung*, which would mean "copy". Hence his definition, echoed by Haroldo de Campos himself, of a "bad translation", that is: "uma transmissão inexacta de um conteúdo inessencial" (ib. 19).

Recall that for both Benjamin and de Campos this operation is "*provisória*", that is, provisional, and by the same token historical. For this reason, de Campos's translation theory ties in naturally with the tenets of reception theory and, in particular with the theses of Wolfgang Iser. Translation is to be understood as a reception, and the fusion of horizons is an essential part of this process of involving the translator in the configuration of meaning. Benjamin's concept of literature as the *Organon der Geschichte* pointed in this direction, as he held that the prerequisite for translation was the value and vigour of the language of the original text, its ability to "endure" change (*Wandlung*) and renovation (*Erneuerung*) and to remain intact. Therefore, for Benjamin the relevance of a work lies not in its genesis, but in its reception (contemporary or not), that is, in its translations, its

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[2] "The translator [...] 'debabelizes' the semiotic *stratum* of languages internalized in the poems, proceeding *as if* [...] this 'intracode' of 'significant forms' were intentional or tendentially common to the original and the text that results from the translation. That is, the translator constructs in parallel (paramorphically) to the original the text of his *'transcreation'*, after 'deconstructing' this original in a first metalinguistic stage. Translation operates, therefore, thanks to a reconfigurating dislocation, the projected reconvergence of divergences, by 'extraditing' the 'intracode' from one language to another, *as if* in the harmonizing pursuit of the same *telos*", in De Campos 1991: 17–31. [Our translation].

perceived value and, in the final analysis, in its ability to endure over time. For Haroldo de Campos, the importance of Iser's proposals lies in his view of the relation between the text and its function. The focus is no longer the genesis of the text, but the interaction between text and reader (or translator). Hence, in the context of translation, the author suggests:

> a reconfiguração da estructura do texto pela 'transcriação' redeterminalhe a função como seu 'horizonte de sentido' (o 'extratexto do original) [...] sobre a interferência do 'extratexto' do presente de tradução pelo qual ele é 'ido' [...] o texto se converte em objeto imaginário, na consciência de seu receptor.[3]

On this view, the text can be read as "fictional discourse", and its reception is less a semantic process than "o processo de experimentação da configuração do imaginário projectado no texto" (ib. 26), a project of critical reading and poetic actualization which has required, the Brazilian author suggests, the development of a new terminology: "*recriação*", "*transcriação*", "*reimaginação*", "*transluciferação*" or "*transluminação*", or "*transparadisação mefistofáustica*" (as in his work on the last scenes of Goethe's *Faust* Part II) are some of the terms he uses to refer to literary translation as he understands it.

To a large extent, Haroldo de Campos's approach refers us to structuralism and, especially to the Czech Felix Vodicka's *The History of the Echo of Literary Works*, who already in 1941 formulated in non-specialist terms Benjamin's concept of "the sacred evolution (*heilige Wachstum*) of languages", understood as the vitality of language. More specifically, for Vodicka, the vitality of a work depends on its potentially intrinsic properties in relation to the evolution of the literary norm. Nevertheless, as De Campos himself perceptively notes, the impact of a work, and the norm, varies from country to country, from one period to another.

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[3] "The reconfiguration of the structure of the text by the 'transcreation' redetermines its function as its 'horizon of meaning' (the 'extratext' of the original) [...] on the interference of the 'extratext' of the present of the translation by which this is 'read' [...] the text becomes an imaginary object, in the consciousness of its receiver". (Ib. 25–26).

Note also the close link to *avant-garde* poetics underlying these barely formulated (and reformulated) positions, and their relevance for the Brazilian *avant-garde* movement. The central role of the study of translation understood as estrangement and "poetic mayeutics" clearly refers us to Pound's practice on translation, and his notion of "*criticism via translation*", since for de Campos translation is a privileged form of critical reading.[4] Previously, Iser had established a dialectic between the real and the imaginary defined as gradual translation (*Übersetzungsvorgang*), and the constant transgression of the perceived data; de Campos's interest in it is of course no coincidence.

Benjamin in fact provided de Campos with a new metaphor for translation. When in his essay *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* Benjamin speaks of "distracted" or "disseminated" reception (*Rezeption in der Zerstreuung*) he is evoking the figure of the translator-transcreator. Translation is, therefore, comparable to cinema insofar as it is a reproduction that may be suspected of "betraying" the original (referential reality, in the cinema), in so far as it undermines the unity of a work, its authenticity, its authority and authorship. De Campos concludes: the translator, in the final analysis, "é um leitorautor, no extremo um 'traidor' o um 'usurpador'" (ib. 25). In Benjamin, we see that the difference in ontological category between the original (*Dichtung*) and the translation (*Umdichtung*) remains intact, but he introduces translation as a way of rescuing and unmasking the original (a concept he later developed under the term *technical reproducibility*), in the context of a poetics understood as a history of art forms (*Kunstformen*). The representability of translation becomes apparent in its "ambiguous"

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[4] De Campos 1976. This vision is very close to an idea of Borges, for whom "translation [...] seems destined to illustrate the aesthetic discussion" ("Las versiones homéricas", in *Discusión*, 1966, 4ª ed. This also ties in with the positions of Octavio Paz, expressed in *Traducción: literatura y literalidad*, Barcelona: Tusquets, 1971, who also distinguishes between "literal translation" or non-translation, and "translation as a literary operation", which necessarily requires a "transformation" or "transmutation", aimed at "producing analogous effects with different means": a "metaphorical" or "metonymic" (and therefore allegorical) translation, but never analogical. The same concept of poetic translation can be found in the writings of Paul Valéry, analysed in De Campos 1984–1985.

figuration, in its status, as he terms it, as "*análogo da representabilidade*": an analogical dimension which de Campos terms, for the sake of semiotic rigour, the "iconicity" of translation.

If, as we noted above, we accept that the text can be read as a "fictional discourse", and that its reception is not so much a semantic process as "*o processo de experimentação da configuração do imaginário projectado no texto*", we would then agree that Jakobson's "creative trans-position", or Benjamin's "transpoetization", as reformulated by de Campos in the concept of "transcreation" are merely processes of "transfictionalization". Or, as the Brazilian author affirms: "*o fictício da tradução é um fictício de 2º grau, que reprocessa, metalingüisticamente, o fictício do poema*" (ibid, p. 26). At different levels, the poetic translator transgressively activates a new selection and a new combination of the extratextual and intratextual elements present in the original. On this view, all literary translation should have a "vocation of dialogue and transgression", and all study of translation should be a "critical collaboration and a transcultural (and therefore historical) objective", a position which will challenge the "naturalized" idea of literal or faithful translation, understood as an activity subordinate to the original ("*auratic*" and "*verocentric*", to quote de Campos), in which the translator should remain invisible. In contrast, in the case of translation understood as "transcreation":

> ao significar-se como operação 'transgressora', a tradução põe desde logo 'entre parênteses' a intangibilidade do original, desnudando-o como ficção exibindo a sua própria ficcionalidade de segundo grau na provisoriedade do *como se*.[5]

The transgressive intention of translation as "transcreation" proposed by de Campos underlies his questioning of the intangibility of the original, threatening its purity and inviolability. This translation will always remain asymmetrical to the original; the relation between them will be a "stigmatic perspective", as he himself defines it (from the Greek *stigma*, understood as a "bridge", but also as something "deviant"), an "asymptotic convergence" or a rapprochement that is

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[5] "signifying itself as a 'transgressive', operation, translation of course puts the intangibility of the original 'into parentheses', denuding it as a fiction exhibiting its own second-degree fictionality in the provisionality of the *as if*." Ib. 30. [Our translation].

always deferred (from the Greek *asymptotos*, "not coincident"). The translated text does not denote the original but connotes it (in the same way the original does not denote but connotes its possible translations). A dialectic of absence/presence is thus established which breaks with the traditional hierarchy existing between original and translation, understanding translation as a criticism of the original text, in its metalinguistic dimension. Hence, if literature is a specialized function of language, translation becomes for de Campos a specialized function of literature, a *metafunction*, or a second-degree function. (De Campos 1987: 189).

2. "Translation is a subversive (re)writing"

When proposing the notion of the translator as *transfingidor:* "trans-feigner", or "trans-faker", Haroldo de Campos suggested that:

> nada mais oportuno [...] no momento em que se desmitifica a 'ideologia da fidelidade', a idéia servil da tradução-cópia, do que repensar a própria tradução enquanto fantasía, enquanto ficção.[6]

The same process of demythologization underlies his translation theory when he describes translation as "metafunction" and defines it as a re-version, referring to the idea of "transvaluation" present in Nietzsche

> como percurso 'inverso' em relação ao do poema, a tradução propõe, por uma dialéctica que lhe é inerente, uma negação da negação, ou seja, uma re-versão. Que é também uma "transvaloração.[7]

In both these positions, and via his proposal for textual transgression present in translation as "transcreation", de Campos aspires to a

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[6] "nothing more opportune [...] in the moment in which 'the ideology of fidelity' is demythologized, the servile idea of the translation-copy, than to rethink translation itself as a fantasy, as a fiction", in De Campos 1991: 27. [Our translation].

[7] "as the 'inverse' precursor in relation to the one in the poem, the translation proposes, through a dialectic inherent in it, a negation of negation, that is, a re-version; it is also a "transvaluation", in De Campos 1987: 189.

subversion of the solidly built social constructions of the Western world, which also underlie the metaphors traditionally accepted as representing translation and the hierarchical relationship between the original and translation (reproduction/copy). The critical stance that he adopts is clearly post-structuralist.

The metaphorization of translation and the interest in its fidelity/infidelity reflect the omnipresent concern in the Western world with the opposition between production/reproduction, an opposition which assigns value in the cultural sphere, and sees originality and creativity in terms of paternity, authorship, and legitimacy. This hierarchization presides over the relationship between writing and translation, between the original and the translated text. Anyone who has translated professionally, even occasionally, is aware that translation has traditionally been a subordinate activity: often in the edition of a book the translator is often completely ignored, and translations are seldom considered in histories of world literature. In the academic world, it is an activity that is rather looked down upon, as well as being poorly paid.

An analysis of the discourse generated by studies on translation over the centuries will highlight the strong sexualization to which the practice has been subjected on many different occasions, in the past and today. As mentioned at the beginning of this introduction, one of the best known metaphors in literary translation appeared in the seventeenth century, "*les belles infidèles*", a particularly expressive description coined by Nicolas Perrot D'Ablancourt which plays with the alliteration of adjective and noun, and which reveals one of the key aspects of the topic: the (masculine) desire for of paternity that dominates the relationship between the original text and the translation. According to this metaphor, translation can be either beautiful or faithful; moreover, though literary translation must necessarily be unfaithful, the original will never be accused of infidelity.

The sexualization of translation was also present in seventeenth-century England. Roscommon, for example, in his writings on translation, spoke of paternity and authorship. The idea persisted into the eighteenth century; Thomas Francklin considers the translator (man) as the author (man), and interprets him as the seducer of the text (woman). Creativity, authorship, and an active attitude thus became traditionally equated with the masculine, whereas reproductivity, translation and the passive role were feminine. Here, as in the France

of the first half of the seventeenth century, translation adopts the role of "mistress" and, beyond any doubt, is "unfaithful".

The same process of "feminization" of the translated text underlies William Cowper's approach to translation, which he described in his preface to his version of Homer's *Iliad*. The topic now combined with the theme of the legitimacy (both sexual and authorial) of the offspring, something which in eighteenth-century England and Romantic Germany was to acquire new strength as translation became equated with colonial expansion.[8] The overlap between the politics of gender and colonialism was evident in the process of European colonization, which found translation to be a fertile ground for development. We need only recall the violence inherent in the sexual metaphors adopted by Thomas Drant (translator of Horace) in his description of the process of translation/violation of the original text, "unavoidable" to adapt its incorporation into the target literature. We could classify this as a clear example of all-conquering colonialism (textually and sexually), but we do not in fact need to go as far as this; the metaphorization to which translation has been subjected throughout history reveals faithfully the concern with paternity, authorship and authority that traditionally pervades the activity. Both "pietist" translators (as Serge Gavronsky accurately defines them in his appraisal of the ambivalence of the Oedipal structure that usually underlies the traditional translation studies options, Gavronsky 1977), who choose, like Roscommon, a positional translation which respects the patriarchal author/translator hierarchy, and "cannibalistic" translators who prefer aggressive translations of the original that reveal the implicit wish to kill and usurp the author/father[9], cannot, today, escape the patriarchal dynamics underlying the ontological status of translation, culturally and ideologically speaking, and which finds a privileged vehicle of representation in the current (or established) constructions on gender. To quote Edward Said, culture is

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[8] On Roscommon, Th. Francklin and W. Cowper, see Steiner 1975: 77, 79, 113–4, 135–6.

[9] The model that releases translation from its subordinate, secondary character is analysed by for example Lori Chamberlain as follows: "Aggressive translator who seizes possession of the 'original', who savours the text, that is, who truly feeds upon the words, who ingurgitates them, and who, thereafter, enunciates them in his own tongue, thereby having explicitly rid himself of the 'original' creator". (Chamberlain 1992).

a representation that cannot escape power relationships or be seen under the prism of political neutrality. Nor can translation.

We find the same dialectic even in more recent discourse on translation. A clear example is George Steiner's model, which illustrates the endurance of the traditional politics regarding the original text and the logic of violence in his interpretation of the translation process as the erotic possession of the text (woman) by the translator (man) (Steiner 1975). The fact that the metaphorization of translation is symptomatic of power relationships in Western culture was already evident in the theoretical revision of translation in Derrida's view of the subversion implicit in the concept of *différance* and the alteration of the dichotomy between the original and the copy or reproduction. But once more we see that Deconstruction also resorts to the sexualization of translation using gender as a conceptual framework to subvert the notions of mimesis, fidelity and originality, and thus question the basic criterion of equivalence. We need only remember Derrida's famous *hymen* metaphor, applied to translation, which evokes both virginity and the consummation of marriage.[10] In Derrida translation acquires an ambiguous status, both original and secondary, uncontaminated and transgressive: translation and original text owe their existence to each other. Translation, as Lori Chamberlain observes, comes to be considered as writing, or even as (re)writing. It is not only transcription, but creative production.

The subversion of the traditional hierarchization between the original and the translated version, and the transformation of translation into productive activity (and thus not *re*-productive or secondary) establishes a close link between the positions of post-colonial translation schools (for instance, the Brazilian) and feminist schools (for instance, the Canadian). Both schools challenge the subordinate condition of translation and demand the translator's absolute visibility (the equivalence of his/her creative status), and condemn the old criterion of fidelity to the original via the transgression of the original text and the subversion of the author or authorship. Both schools claim the right to paternity, which confers legitimacy on the translated text, and puts translation on a par with

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[10] "[...] the hymen only takes place when it doesn't take place", is what is "*between*", what places us in the dialectic of the limit, between impossibility and necessity.This is also true of the translation with respect to the original. See Derrida 1985: 192.

writing by converting it into a creative production. Translation abandons its subservient condition to become a savage practice of appropriation of the original text, which is literally cannibalized (as we observe in Oswald de Andrade's *Manifiesto Antropófago*), devoured, assimilated.[11] Thus the old hierarchical relation between the author and the translator breaks down; it is defined now in terms of an anthropophagous collision, not devoid of violence (the same violence we observed in the sexual metaphors applied to translation), tending towards defining the relationship with the author and the source literature as a two-way transcultural flow (as the Brazilian school proposes) between the centre and periphery, in a clearly post-colonial and post-structuralist stage. As Else Vieira opportunely observed,

> The cannibalistic translational philosophy of nourishing from two reservoirs, the source text and the target literature, and, to the same extent, the reverse reading of translation operated by Benjamin and Derrida exposes a number of epistemological questions that traditional traductology is unfit to answer. Or, using Benjamin's terms, traditional traductology demands a translation, a revision [...] if, in the cannibalistic philosophy translation becomes a two-way flow, the very terminology 'source' and 'target' becomes depleted. By the same token, the power relation between source and target, superior/inferior ceases to exist.[12]

This conception of the act of translating as a vehicle for challenging the dominant culture and colonialist cultural relationships is what in fact underlies the anthropophagous approach of the Brazilian translation school. Celebrating translation as writing (creative translation or transcreation), and conferring on the translator the status of "creator"

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[11] Along the same lines, see the preface by Augusto de Campos (1978) to his volume *Verso, reverso, controverso*. São Paulo: Perspectiva, where he states that "A minha maneira de amá-los [os companheiros de espírito] é traduzi-los. Ou degluti-los, segundo a Lei Antropofágica de Oswald de Andrade: só me interessa o que não é meu. Tradução para mim é *persona*. Quasi heterônimo. Entrar dentro da pele do fingidor para refingir tudo de novo, dor por dor, som por som, cor por cor. Por isso nunca me propus traduzir tudo. Só aquilo que sinto. Só aquilo que minto. Ou que minto que sinto, como diria, ainda uma vez, Pessoa em sua própria *persona*" (De Campos 1978: 7).

[12] Bassnett 1993. See also Vieira 1999.

goes much further than merely rendering the translator visible in translation. It involves an acceptance of the relevance of textual transgression, which, on the one hand, rescues it from the charge of "treachery" (against the original text, or the author) traditionally applied, as we saw above, to "literary translation", and, on the other, is a strategy of subversion that demythologizes the Eurocentrism of the cultural tradition; this cultural tradition finds itself anthropophagized, or cannibalized, by the translator and assimilated into the target literature. (Godayol 2000). This notion of translation highlights the need today, as suggested by Else Vieira, for a "translation" of concepts considered immovable in traditional translation studies in the light of post-structuralist and post-colonialist approaches and the new cultural realities in an increasingly globalized and multicultural world.

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Para una teoría de la literatura de viajes

ABDELMOUNEIM BOUNOU

A diferencia del viaje en la literatura con el que convivió mucho hasta generar confusiones y ambigüedades, la literatura de viajes es un subgénero literario con estatuto reconocido, como el género histórico o el policiaco, etc. Su reconocimiento tardío — el siglo XVIII consagra la literatura de viajes — se debe a su naturaleza variada, fronteriza e interdisciplinario de diversos textos de carácter literario, histórico y antropológico.

La autonomía y la tipología de la Literatura de Viajes es de reconocimiento reciente debido a la naturaleza heterogénea e interdisciplinaria de textos procedentes de horizontes dispares. Los relatos de viajes informan bastante sobre las estructuras mentales y psicológicas de sus autores y se relacionan a menudo con prejuicios de una representación colectiva del extranjero. Ningún extranjero ve un país como lo quisieran los autóctonos. Esto es lo que justifica el predominio de elementos subjetivos en las opiniones exteriores. La visión del Otro fomenta el diálogo entre lo local y lo universal, lo propio y lo extraño. El viaje siempre ha sido objeto de atención literaria y psicológica. Para Freud, el viaje es cumplimiento del deseo infantil y huido de la opresión familiar.

El viaje en la literatura y la literatura de viajes han convivido tanto que terminaron por generar ambigüedades entre ambos. El viaje es tan antiguo como la humanidad. En la tradición greco-latina es el argumento del poema de *La Odisea*. La presencia o la ausencia del viaje no determinan la literatura de viajes. Tampoco tiene la literatura de viajes el monopolio de los viajes y «tout récit est un récit de voyage» señala Michel Certeau.

Distintos historiadores de literatura, portugueses como españoles, ingleses y franceses (Cristóvão 1999: 22–25) presentan esta literatura con diversas designaciones: «literatura de viajes», «narrativas de viajes», «relaciones de viajes», «literatura de expansión», «ciclo de descubrimientos», etc. Toda esta nomenclatura es prueba de la difícil definición de la literatura de viajes por los filólogos y los críticos literarios. En una palabra, la literatura de viajes no cabe en los límites de descubrimiento y de expansión y exige un marco conceptual más global.

El comienzo de la literatura de viajes (se identifica en la expresión ultramarina) corresponde al siglo XV y coincide con el final de la exploración de las rutas europeas, asiáticas y africanas. A partir de este momento, nos dice el historiador de los viajes Fernando Cristóvão, se esboza la transformación de un corpus predominantemente historiográfico e antropológico en corpus literario *sui generis*. Es un salto cualitativo del documental (asociado a lo maravilloso) al literario.

Con el descubrimiento de la imprenta (1455), se dinamiza y se bombardea la publicación de narrativas y descripciones (aventuras, emociones, conquistas que se llamaban «Nuevo Mundo»). Luego el turismo altera completamente los hábitos ancestrales del viaje, de la lectura y de la narración cerrando así el ciclo de la literatura de viajes e iniciando una realidad diferente (turismo de masas, hábitos de lectura fueron alterados (avión, tren), se prefieren los diarios y los telegramas de las agencias a las narrativas largas. El viaje se democratiza y se generaliza.

Con el turismo, todos pueden ir a todas partes (máquina fotográfica y vídeo matan la narración maravillosa). Por eso la literature de viajes turística con sus guías turísticos elaborados por especialistas es muy pobre. De esta pobreza y esterilidad se salvan algunas crónicas y algunos reportajes.

Para Fernando Cristóvão (Cristóvão 1999: 35) se entiende por literatura de viajes el subgénero literario que se mantiene vivo del siglo XV al final del siglo XIX, cuyos textos, de carácter compuesto, entrecruzan literatura con historia y antropología. El narrador efectúa uno o varios viajes reales o ficticios (mar, tierra, aire), buscando temas, motivos y formas. Su estilo es sencillo, transparente.

Las características a que obedece la narración-descripción de la Literatura de Viajes (cualquier viajero que desee volverse instruido

debe enterarse de los múltiples aspectos característicos de la realidad observada: estado, eclesiástico, militar, económico, moral) son típicamente europeas y por consiguiente se distinguen de otros ciclos de Literatura de Viajes de otros pueblos y continentes, tributarias de otras motivaciones y formas artísticas. Los objetivos del viaje fueron casi siempre los mismos: descubrir, saber, cartografiar, conquistar, admirar, comercializar, convertir almas, escapar y buscar.

Tipología para la literatura de viajes

La gran abundancia y diversidad de textos publicados durante más de cuatro siglos dio lugar a numerosos ensayos de clasificación tipológica. Autores, editores y críticos agrupan varios textos en función del destino geográfico de los viajes (África, Asia, América), en función de los protagonistas (soldados, marineros, embajadores) del origen y de la nacionalidad de los viajeros y de los temas desarrollados (expansión, mar) o en función del desplazamiento espacio-temporal o en la jerarquía social.

Podemos afirmar que es partiendo de una teoría global y basándonos en un criterio temático amplio — éste permite un conocimiento amplio de la referencia, de la literariedad — y no sólo geográfico, nacional o cronológico, cuando se logra una comprensión «correcta» de estos textos.

En función, pues, de la existencia de una literatura de viajes, es posible esbozar una tipología de esta literatura de carácter temático:

1. Viajes religiosos o de peregrinación
2. Viajes de comercio
3. Viaje de expansión (política, religiosa, científica)
4. Viaje de las embajadas
5. Viaje erudito
6. Viajes imaginarios

1. Viajes de peregrinación

En todas las religiones, el viaje tiene gran importancia. Anteriores al siglo XV, fueron los primeros que incentivaron la movilidad de los viajeros. La idea de la

peregrinación religiosa es de mayor antigüedad, viene del fondo de los tiempos y es común a todas las religiones y culturas. Romain Roussel habla del predominio de «la intencionalidad devota» en este tipo de viajes.

Al lado de la manifestación de la fe de los peregrinos, también se divulgan leyendas, mitos, información de nuevas tierras, usos y costumbres estimulando el gusto europeo a procurar tierras y nuevas emociones (Palestina, Jerusalén, Roma, Sevilla).

Por otra parte, la peregrinación hacia la Meca fue el motivo de varios viajes procedentes de Asia, África y el Sur de Europa (los moriscos). Estos viajes dieron lugar a narrativas (Rahalat Hiyazia) donde se describían aventuras paralelas a la peregrinación. Palestina, en general, y al Qóds-Jerusalén, en especial, era la Meca de numerosos viajes desde el tiempo de las cruzadas.

2. Viajes de comercio

Es preciso recordar que la narrativa o descripción motivadas por el comercio, tal vez dentro de la literatura de viajes son las que han producido menos obras consagradas al tema. En éstas podemos hablar de dos tipos de obras: unas informan sobre el itinerario, las transacciones, los mercados, las medidas..., aquéllas en que estas informaciones se integran en un contexto amplio de descripción de las regiones, usos, costumbres, religiones, lenguas.

Las grandes rutas comerciales por tierra o por mar eran la ruta de la seda de China, las rutas marítimas colindantes con las costas africanas y del Mediterráneo.

3. Viaje de expansión

El humanismo y el renacimiento son prueba de una madurez social y científica que se va a traducir en movimientos expansionistas. El desarrollo económico e industrial exigía nuevas materias que era preciso adquirir y saber manipular. Por eso, nos dicen Manuel

Lucena y Miguel Angel Puig-Samper (Giraldo y Puig-Samper 2003: 6) que la literatura de viajes quedó asociada a la aventura de la expansión europea, al drama de sus crímenes y la gloria de sus hallazgos. De ahí, las distintas motivaciones para la expansión europea.

El primero de estos motivos de la expansión europea era político. Protagonizada por los dos países ibéricos a través de las navegaciones oceánicas del siglo XV (conquista de tierras y de productos) y seguida por los ingleses y los holandeses en el siglo XVII. Los portugueses fueron los primeros en lanzarse en la expansión (Conquista de Ceuta en 1415). Son de gran variedad y tensión dramática los relatos de diversos tipos de expansión: exaltación (Cristóbal Colón, Vasco de Gama, Cabral, Pizarro, Cortés, etc.) destrucción, esclavitud (Las Casas y António Vieira). Se generaliza la idea simplista de que América era la tierra o «Nuevo Mundo» edénico de felicidad y África el continente de tristeza y desgracia (tal vez a causa de las narrativas del naufragio, sobre todo de la trágica Odisea de Manuel de Sepúlveda). A este respecto, el portugués Joaquim Barradas de Carvalho ha restringido la Literatura de Viajes a un listado muy reducido de textos portugueses de carácter históríco y marítimo (crónicas, descripciones de tierras, guías náuticos).

Durante mucho tiempo, las vías marítimas que habían nutrido la literatura de viajes eran La India, Extremo Oriente, África América. A partir de finales del siglo XIX y principios del XX una verdadera fiebre de viajar con destino a África se apodera de los europeos y más especialmente de los españoles[1] y de los portugueses[2]. Las expediciones se supeditan a los intereses

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[1] José Boada y Romeu *Allende el estrecho. Viajes por Marruecos* (1889); Julián A. de Sestri, *Por todo Marruecos* (1897); Cristóbal Benítez, *Mi viaje por el interior del África* ((1899); Cherif Sid el Hach Abd- el Nabí Ben Ramos, *Perlas negras* (1903); Julio Cervera Baviera, *Expedición al interior de Marruecos* (1909).

[2] Rui da Câmara, *Viagens em Marrocos*, (1876), José Daniel Colaço, Viagem de sua Majestade El Rei O Señor Dom Fernando a Marrocos, (1882); virgilio Correia, *Lugares dalém* (1923); Rocha Junior, *Terras mouras*, (1925); Oldemiro Cesar, Terras de misterio, (1925); Herlander Ribeiro, *Uma semana*

políticos y confirman la lucidez de Jean Jacques Rousseau, uno de los padres de la Ilustración: "Se dice que tenemos sabios que viajan para instruirse; es un error. Los sabios viajan por interés como los demás. Ya no existen los Platones ni los Pitágoras, o si existen están lejos de nosotros". (Bernabéu Albert 2003: 49). Gran parte de esta fiebre entra en el marco de las codicias internacionales que empiezan a alimentar el deseo de conquistar nuevas tierras. El movimiento de expansión de las potencias europeas (Inglaterra, Francia, España, Italia y Alemania) viene acompañado y a veces precedido por viajes de exploración, prospección y documentación acerca del sur del Mediterráneo. Hombres acreditados oficialmente[3] y exploradores solitarios hispánicos[4] llegan a África para un reconocimiento del territorio y una prospección de todos los aspectos de las sociedades.

El segundo de estos motivos era religioso. Se pretendía evangelizar a los pueblos de otros continentes (los indígenas) y llevar la fe católica a los lugares más recónditos.

La dinámica de estos viajes está marcada profundamente por la expansión de la fe (cartas de los misionarios, jesuitas, narrativas de misionarios en países exóticos) y se distinguen claramente de los textos de los viajes de peregrinación.

El tercer motivo de estos viajes era más bien científico. La búsqueda de las Ciencias (el saber y el conocimiento) era uno de los motivos más antiguos que animaron al Hombre a viajar. Son los viajeros de la Ilustración, casi todos del siglo XVIII y XIX (Maupertuis, A. Humboldt, Darwin). Dentro de este grupo de viajeros, podemos hablar de una tipología: viajes científicos (Cavanilles), naturalistas, artísticos, históricos y literarios (Jovellanos). En Francia, se produce una

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em Marrocos, (1933); Ricardo Jorge, *De ceca e meca,* S.F.; José de Esaguy, *Marrocos,* (1933).

[3] Domingo Badía y Leblich, Cherif Sid el Hach Abd-el Nabí Ben Ramos, José Daniel Colaço, Oldemiro Cesar, José de Esaguy; Urbano Rodríguez.

[4] Julián A. de Sestri, Gómez Carrillo, Mercedes Saenz Alonso, etc.

avalancha de libros de viajes. Nos dice Salvador Bernabéu Albert que los viajeros del setecientos no inventaron nada, lo nuevo fue el considerable aumento de su número (Bernabéu Albert 2003: 39). Para los científicos portugueses el campo de observación era tradicionalmente Oriente y Brasil pero rápidamente se alargó a África.

4. Viaje de las embajadas

Son los viajes que efectúan una o varias personas mandadas por los reyes o gobernadores para otros países. En la tradición árabe los viajes de las embajadas eran muy numerosos; la parte oeste del mundo árabe supera la parte este en lo que atañe el número de estos viajes.

5. Viaje erudito

Los autores de este tipo de viajes están profundamente preocupados por la adquisición de conocimientos. El espíritu humanístico y la búsqueda del saber constituyen el catalizador de estos viajes. Preceptores, artistas, eclesiásticos, becarios, intelectuales criticos deseosos de encontrar fuera lo que les faltaba dentro. Sus itinerarios fueron Europa culta, Alemania, Francia, Italia.

La fiebre que se apoderó de los europeos, descrita por Paul Hazard (Hazard 1952: 8), en los siglos XVII-XVIII está motivada por la curiosidad intelectual, por toda especie de conocimiento.

En el Maghreb el viaje en busca de las Ciencias predomina sobre los demás tipos de viajes (Sharif al Edrisí en el siglo XII, Ibn Jaldún en siglo XIV). En este tipo de viajes podemos incluir al infatigable viajero árabe Ibn Batuta (XIV) quien se ha desplazado durante 28 años entre los océanos Pacífico y Atlántico, entre Rusia y África.

6. Viajes imaginarios

El viaje imaginario es aquel en que se da libre curso a la imaginación partiendo tanto de la realidad como de la ficción. Pasado, presente y futuro constituyen el tiempo en el que transcurren los aconteceres. En estos viajes poetas, escritores y místicos comparan esta vida con la alienación, el exilio, el infierno, la muerte y anhelan la liberación total de la realidad. En la cultura árabe podemos hablar del ejemplo del *Rissalat al Ghufrane* del gran poeta Al Ma'rry (la acción corresponde al día del juicio final en el paraíso y en el infierno). En la cultura occidental podemos hablar de algunos ejemplos muy destacados y que son: *La divina comedia* del Dante, *Utopía* de Tomás Moro (1516) y *Robinson Crusoe* de Defoe.

Ahora, la frontera entre la literatura de viajes y la literatura de ficción parece poco estable ya que el vasto territorio de la literatura de ficción puede fácilmente abarcar toda especie de fantasía.

Por cierto, esta tipología es una de varias posibles, pero con ella pienso contribuir a una mejor lectura de la Literatura de Viajes. No pretendo resolver el debate sobre los elementos teóricos para definir la naturaleza de este género literario. Con esta evaluación de los significados culturales y socio-políticos de los viajes, me sumo al gran número de seguidores, hoy día, de este género literario «omnívoro» (Bernabéu Albert 2003: 41) que no cesa de despertar, cada vez más, un interés público y académico.

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Physical Journeys and Journeys of Liberation: Laurence Sterne and Tobias Smollett compared.[1]

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The message of Laurence Sterne's *A Sentimental Journey through France and Italy* (1768) goes far beyond the mere account of a physical journey written in response to the eighteenth-century vogue for travel narratives. Sterne's journey is aimed at creating a new literary text: a liberated text which could give shelter to those social images, artistic beliefs, and patterns of human behaviour whose literary representation had been excluded from the 'official' canon. Sterne intended to revitalise the function of literary texts, bringing them closer to human needs and expectations. The humanistic significance of his journey can be best understood when compared, for example, with the message of other travel narratives, such as Tobias Smollett's *Travels through France and Italy* (1766), a journey by a 'splenetic' traveller which never crosses the boundaries of its physical dimension and does not provide any conscious insight into the liberating power of literature.

Sterne considered his *Sentimental Journey* as a 'vehicle' (Sterne 1984: 31). The word 'vehicle' suggests that the fictional material of the *Journey* is just a pretext, the means to convey a deep message. In his *Journey*, Sterne immortalised his energetic will to subvert dehumanised conceptions of literature. By 'dehumanised' I mean 'unwilling to reflect in the text the complexity of human nature.' The texts written according to dehumanised literary theories recreate only those human or artistic aspects authorised by dominant cultural

[1] This essay is dedicated to Jüri Talvet, to whom I shall always be grateful.

interests, while discarding *the others*, which are considered as subversive. Sterne strove to demonstrate that literature has, above all, a liberating role and, for that reason, he freed *A Sentimental Journey* from the necessary accommodation to these official principles. In order to bring his *Journey* closer to his readers, he presented it as a text welcoming every aspect of our human complexity, every vital experience. He might have thought that only if readers saw themselves faithfully reflected in a literary text — noble qualities and weaknesses, the rational faculty and subversive emotions included — would they appreciate the valuable link between literature and life, and consequently, the power of literature to alter fixed structures, to change or modify life.

Sterne's project in his *Journey* can be characterised as 'humanistic,' in the sense put forward by Jüri Talvet in an excellent article entitled "Between Dreams and Reality: The Message and the Image of Renaissance Humanism" (2004). Talvet defines Renaissance Humanism as "a border culture *par excellence*, capable of accumulating ambiguities — a substantial premise for producing powerful 'explosions' and subsequent 'leaps' [...] to new and different qualities in culture" (ib. 135). He considers William Shakespeare, Thomas More, and Erasmus as writers "in a constant revolt against any petrified significations, manipulated by the power-structures of their time or the times to come" (ib. 138). Their works are "[...] open to reality in its widest sense: to all five senses and all faculties comprised by man" (ib.).

The spirit of this critical humanism, in revolt against any petrified significations, and open to reality in its widest sense, permeates the microcosmos of *A Sentimental Journey*. Sterne attacks the excesses of the eighteenth-century cult of reason, a cult from which 'subversive' emotions and 'unexpected' or 'inappropriate' human feelings had been excluded. Yorick writes "not to apologize for the weaknesses of [his] heart [...] — but to give an account of them" (Sterne 1984: 16). He declares that he hates all "cold conceptions" about literature and life (ib. 49), that is, those artistic macro-theories which, while intending to be considered as 'orthodox,' dramatically castrated or reduced the complexity of human nature. Yorick's humanistic vision denotes, above all, a "vivid interest in all sides of life" (Lamont 1965: 11). His journey through France and Italy is the 'physical,' perceptible metaphor of a desire to be in contact with "a great deal both of men

and manners" (Sterne 1984: 62), a desire which is contained in the following paragraph:

> — What a large volume of adventures may be grasped within this little span of life by him who interests his heart in every thing, and who, having eyes to see, what time and chance are perpetually holding out to him as he journeyeth on his way, misses nothing he can fairly lay his hands on — . (Ib. 28)

A Sentimental Journey does not simply intend to create aesthetic controversy, but to threaten existing literary conceptions. It is a metaphorical journey based on an unending questioning of fixed rhetorical assumptions and conventions. Yorick asserts that "the man who either disdains or fears to walk up a dark entry may be an excellent good man, and fit for a hundred things; but he will not do to make a good sentimental traveller" (ib. 107). By 'dark entry' he probably meant the cultural space whose literary exploration had been 'forbidden' by contemporary theories. The *Journey* is furnished with textual evidence suggesting that the typical *motifs* of a physical journey are just fictional pretexts to convey a deep message. In fact, the novel appears entitled as *A Sentimental Journey &c. &c.*, abbreviations which, in my opinion, expand the narrow *motif* of the real journey towards other spheres of signification. When Yorick visits Le Count de B*****, in Versailles, he declares that he has not seen the Palais Royal, nor the Louvre, because

> I conceive every fair being as a temple, and would rather enter in, and see the original drawings and loose sketches hung up in it, than the transfiguration of Raphael itself [...] 'tis a quiet journey of the heart in pursuit of NATURE, and those affections which rise out of her, which make us love each other, and the world, better than we do. (Ib. 84–85)

By contrast, Smollett designed his *Travels through France and Italy* (1766) according to the 'official' expectations concerning the aims and function of eighteenth-century 'physical' travel narratives. His main aim is "to satisfy [his] own curiosity and that of [his] friends" (Smollett 1981: 164) by presenting a compilation of physical "observations made on remarkable objects" (ib. 255). Yorick asserts that his journey is a journey in search of human NATURE because he

intended to de-stabilise dehumanised conceptions of literature by expanding the range of human images that could be recreated in a literary text. His disdain for an official, dehumanised art appears reflected in one of the scenes set in Paris, when he feels as an outsider in the *coterie* of Madame de V***, which urges him to abandon France and set out for Italy:

> The better the *Coterie* — the more children of Art — I languish'd for those of Nature: and one night, after a most vile prostitution of myself to half a dozen different people, I grew sick — went to bed — order'd La Fleur to get me horses in the morning to set out for Italy. (Sterne 1984: 112)

Yorick's journey symbolises, in fact, a flight from cultural and vital limitations, from the philosophical, artistic and epistemological prisons that haunted the eighteenth century imagination (Carnochan 1977: 7). As he declares, independent "knowledge and improvements are to be got by sailing and posting for that purpose" (Sterne 1984: 12).[2] Since Yorick's journey is 'symbolic', he endows the realistic elements of his journey with a metaphorical value. England, the country of origin, becomes a metaphor for conformism, for a 'comfortable' life lived within clearly fixed limits and deprived of the desire for new experiences. This is clearly envisaged in an apparently innocent episode in which Yorick tells the story of a captive starling which his servant La Fleur had bought for a bottle of Burgundy. The starling is continuously singing "I can't get out," and Yorick lets us know that the bird "had learn'd his notes" in England (ib. 75). When the Marquis de B**** tells him that "he could like to take a trip to England," Yorick replies: "Stay where you are, I beseech you" (ib. 110).

Chadwick has described *A Sentimental Journey* as the triumph of communication between Yorick and foreign sensibility, between Yorick and the new or the unknown (Chadwick 1978: 193). The *Journey* is designed to give literary shelter to a "large volume" of adventures (Sterne 1984: 28) which go beyond ideological or aesthetic

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[2] During the seventeenth century J. Kepler, in *The Somnium* (1634), had literaturised the journeys to the moon as a way of escaping from earthly limitations and, in *The Man in the Moon* (1638), Francis Godwin had even created a planetary other on whom all the strangeness and charm which he could not reach in his real context were projected (Baine Campbell 1997: 3–5).

restrictions. This attitude is the reserve of Smollett's who, in *Travels through France and Italy*, is desperately looking for his compatriots, which could be interpreted as metaphors for the known. In Boulogne, for example, he meets a certain Mrs. B — , whom he considers a good lady simply because "she speaks English prettily and is greatly attached to the people and the customs of our nation" (ib. 24). Yorick, though, starts on his journeys by holding the hand of a mysterious lady. They are "two utter strangers [...] of different sexes, and perhaps from different corners of the globe" (ib. 19). The *Journey* concludes, lyrically, with Yorick stretching out his hand to catch hold of that of a young *fille de chambre*,[3] who becomes the metaphor for Yorick's desire to enrich his life with new adventures, even if they are forbidden. Smollett concludes his tour in a very different way. From Boulogne, contemplating the cliffs of Dover, he writes:

> I am at last in a situation to indulge my view with a sight of Britain. [...] I am attached to my country, because it is the land of liberty, cleanliness, and convenience: but I love it still more tenderly, as the scene of all my interesting connexions; as the habitation of my friends, for whose conversation, correspondence, and esteem, I wish alone to live. (Smollett 1981: 327)

The Augustan Humanism, with its set of anthropological, ethical and artistic beliefs could be taken as another Sternean metaphor for confinement, for an epistemological prison from which Yorick wished to break free. The term 'Augustan' has been traditionally taken to describe the eighteenth-century 'orthodox' rhetorical tradition. Although the unquestioned authority of the Augustan Humanism was never a reality, this movement aspired — through an emphasis on the didactic and normative character of literature — to become the only

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[3] Travelling to Turin through Savoy, Yorick decides to stop and find accommodation at a guest house. There is only one chamber left. A Piedmontese lady and her young *fille de chambre*, arriving shortly after Yorick, will have to sleep in the same room as him. Since the space between the two beds is ridiculous, it was agreed that the opening of the curtains of both beds should be fastened up with corking pins or needle, that Yorick should lie the whole night in his *robe de chambre* and that he should not speak a single word the whole night. However, we find the young *fille de chambre* mysteriously violating the space between the two beds, so that when Yorick stretches out his hand in the darkness he catches hold of the young girl's (ib. 120–125).

valid artistic theory. The term 'Augustan' denotes the prestige enjoyed by the Roman Augustan Age all over Europe during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. As a consequence, the excellence of literary texts came to be measured by its degree of adaptation to classical stereotypes. Samuel Johnson's statement that John Dryden had found English literature brick, and left it marble,[4] helped to build the Augustan stereotype: a fervent emphasis on formal perfection sanctioned by fixed rules. The impulse towards literary innovation should be restricted, and the unrestrained potential of the imaginative experience — so 'dangerous' — controlled by fixed literary rules. Military images, suggesting that the literary rules are necessary weapons against disorder, recur throughout in the Augustan rhetoric. According to Johnson, for example, the purpose of novels should be "to initiate youth by mock encounters in the art of necessary defence, and to increase prudence without impairing virtue" (Johnson 1973: 69).

Sterne considered literature as a source of vitality, as a vehicle for self-fulfilment: fixed rules rendered this impossible. In *A Sentimental Journey*, Yorick highlights "the novelty of [his] vehicle," declaring that "both [his] travels and observations will be altogether of a different cast from any of [his] fore-runners" (Sterne 1984: 11). In *Tristram Shandy* (1759–1767), Yorick had died, because he had succumbed to the artistic dehumanisation represented by the hypercritics, metaphors for the Augustan critics. Sterne inserted in this novel two completely black pages, symbolising not only the mourning for his death, but also for the absence of vitality in literature (I. xii.31–32). In *A Sentimental Journey* Yorick resuscitates because, on this occasion, he can create his own personal text, a text liberated from dehumanised artistic principles.

The restriction of formal innovation had also touched travel literature.[5] Addison's *Remarks on Several Parts of Italy* (1705) had

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[4] See Johnson's Preface to Dryden (1779) in *Prefaces, Biographical and Critical, to the Works of the English Poets* (1984: 724).

[5] Batten mentions the example of Samuel Paterson, who, in *Another Traveller*, includes the following normative 'recipe' about how to write a travel book: "Enter your *particulars* after the following manner: Gates; Streets; Parish-churches; Convents; Bridges; Cathedral; Houses; Inhabitants; And your *remarkables*, as they happen to fall out. — For example; such a picture may be seen in such a place; such a relic, in such another; — such a man was born here; and such another was buried here: — My lord such a one

become the *vademecum* for British travellers (Batten 1978: 10–11). Sterne criticised this official specimen of travel narrative in Volume VII of *Tristram Shandy,* where "the great Addison" appears writing his travels with a "satchel of school-books hanging from his a[rse]" (VII. iv. 434). Sterne, for whom literary texts should be as close as possible to the author's life, might have conceived Addison's book as the representative of the dehumanised conventions of eighteenth-century travel writing, according to which personal experiences should be subordinated to description. In fact, reviewers frequently condemned travel books that seemed too autobiographical. The role of travel writers should merely be describing objects, communicating anecdotes, and relate incidental occurrences, since they should never play an important role in their books. In fact, eighteenth-century writers would employ awkward techniques to avoid the censure of being too autobiographical (ib. 24–40).[6]

Fundamental veracity became the basic narrative criterion for eighteenth-century travel narratives. Writers would frequently resort to a wide variety of means to attest the veracity of their productions.[7] In *Travels through France and Italy* (1766) Tobias Smollett imitated these 'authentic' travel accounts. His *Travels* primarily contain an accurate description of those parts of France and Italy which he had visited. Although he presents some anecdotes and personal experiences, these are clearly subservient in importance to these descriptions.

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lives in this street; my lady such a one in that square: The Virgin Mary with her own hands, built such a chapel; and the Devil flew away with such a steeple" (Batten 1978: 86).

[6] Thomas Pennant, for example, excluded the first-person pronoun from his *Tour in Scotland* (1771). Other travellers, like Addison and Gilpin, frequently employed the editorial *we*; Ann Radcliffe followed this same practice so frequently in her *Journey* (1795) that she had to include a special explanatory note indicating that the *we* referred to herself and her husband, who accompanied her on this trip (Batten 1978: 40).

[7] Let us mention, for example, Henry Swiburne's opening plea in his *Travels through Spain* (1779): "There is but one merit I insist upon, that of a steady adherence to Veracity, as far as I was able to discern Truth from falsehood. I may be detected in many mistakes; because a foreigner must often be exposed to receive partial accounts of things from the natives, who have an interest in hiding the nakedness of their country, and in exaggerating its advantages; but I shall never be detected in a wilful perversion of the truth" (quoted by Batten 1978: 58).

Similarly, in *Letters from Italy, Describing the Customs and Manners of the Country, in the Years 1765 and 1766*, Samuel Sharp "spends his time measuring buildings and courtyards and gathering statistics about the numbers of inhabitants of towns" (Cash 1992: 243–244). Yorick, by contrast, became the first-person, 'egocentric' traveller whom the century had condemned. He ridiculed both Smollett and Sharp in *A Sentimental Journey*, where they respectively appear immortalised under the names of *Smelfungus* and *Mundungus*: "I heartily pity them" — he writes — "they have brought up no faculties for this work" (Sterne 1984: 29). Smollett simply offers to his readers an encyclopaedic travel book, which, in an attempt to describe virtually everything of interest in particular countries, omits or abbreviates personal ideas and reflections (Batten 1978: 85). In letter XVI, we find him measuring the arena of an amphitheatre with packthread, to find out that "it is an oval figure; the longest diameter extending to about one hundred and thirteen feet, and the shortest to eighty-eight" (Smollett 1981: 140). Smollett himself came to describe these impersonal passages, subjected to the official dictates concerning travel narratives, as "tedious epistles" (ib. 233).

The ethics underlying the Augustan conception of literature was closely related to the philosophy known as 'Augustianism,' which denoted the interpretation of Christian faith, especially with regard to the doctrine of sin and redemption, which had its origin in the teaching of Augustine (Greene 1967: 42). Augustianism was based on the affirmation of man's inherent moral weakness. Consequently, the primary obligation of the artist should be the strenuous determination of moral questions: "prescription rather than description is the humanist's business. The humanist takes almost a sensual pleasure in the image of moral virtue, especially the image of self-restraint triumphing over temptation" and, because of man's flawed and corrupted nature, and his consequent need of redemptive assistance, "man's relation to literature and art is primarily moral and only secondarily aesthetic. Only if man were not flawed could the humanist justify a literary aesthetics of pure pleasure" (Fussell 1965: 8–9). Thus, structures of literary authority had to be established because man was no longer capable of living paradise. This idea also influenced travel literature: Batten has noted that many travel narratives contained sections entitled, for example, "most notable and excellent instructions for travellers" or "profitable instructions"

(Batten 1978: 88, 91). In *Travels through France and Italy*, Smollett intends to provide his readers with "necessary piece[s] of information to those who may be inclined to follow the same route" (Smollett 1981: 203). In letter XXV, for example, he recommends travellers to be provided "with a proper pass, signed and sealed by our consul, as well as with letters of recommendation from him to the English consuls" (ib. 198), in order to avoid any possible risk. By contrast, Yorick sets out for France without a passport and completely ignorant of the fact that, at the time, France was at war with England and that, consequently, he could have easily been imprisoned in *La Bastille*. This narrative episode could be interpreted as a metaphor for the desire of contamination with the 'forbidden' complexity of life. Yorick recommends his reader to walk up a "dark entry" (Sterne 1984: 107) and "interest his heart in every thing", "miss[ing] nothing he can fairly lay his hands on" (ib. 28).

Sterne's *Journey* is aimed at showing readers the 'liberating force of a liberated text' by presenting Yorick's own liberation through literature as an example. As I have already mentioned, he writes his *Sentimental Journey* "not to apologize for the weaknesses of [his] heart [...], but to give an account of them" (ib. 16). Far from the restrictions imposed by the Augustinian ethics, Yorick, trapped between his earthly instincts and his noble ideals, does not insert in his journey any images of human virtue. Rather, he offers a picture of his humaneness which embraces both good and evil:

> If nature has so wove her web of kindness, that some threads of love and desire are entangled with the piece — must the whole web be rent in drawing them out? — Whip me such stoics, great governor of nature! [...] Wherever thy providence shall place me for the trials of my virtue — whatever is my danger — whatever is my situation — let me feel the movements which rise out of it, and which belong to me as a man. (ib. 94)

In the episode entitled "The Temptation," Yorick spends two hours in a hotel room with a young *fille de chambre*. There is not any sexual intercourse, but he benefits from the sensuality of the episode in order to 'manufacture' a freer (and more personal) conception of 'virtue.' Virtue does not consist in restrain, but in experiencing the pleasures of being truly human: "virtue flies after the heart [...] not to call it back, but to make the sensation[s] [...] more delicious to the nerves — " (ib.

92). Thanks to sentimental moments like this, Yorick comes to know himself better: "[he is] positive [he has] a soul" (ib. 114).[8] Smollett's physical *Travels through France and Italy* were not aimed at self-knowledge. We find him travelling with a family of five persons (Smollett 1981: 3), and flying from himself, badly in need of "a companion and fellow traveller, whose conversation and society could alleviate the horrors of solitude" (ib. 195). When he arrives in France, his books are stopped at the *bureau*, and sent to Amiens to be examined by the *chambre syndicale*, "lest they should contain something prejudicial to the state, or to the religion of the country" (ib. 10). He appears as "exceedingly mortified at the detention of [his] books, which [...] deprives [him] of an amusement which [he] can very ill dispense with" (ib.).

Yorick's *Journey* is written against those pessimistic dogmatists who, like the Shandean hypercritics, conceive human nature as something imperfect and corrupted which must be controlled by normative authorities. As Dowling has noted, in the relation between Tristram and the hypercritics "we have the relation between the free life of the imagination and those powers of church and state committed, in the name of established order, to silencing all genuine imaginative expression" (Dowling 1980: 288). A *Sentimental Journey* renews Sterne's optimistic faith in human nature, and in its creative potential, a faith which he had already proclaimed in *Tristram Shandy*, a book written *against the spleen* (IV. xxii. 270). The physical *motif* of the spleen[9] emerges as a Sternean metaphor used to characterise not only the Augustan conception of human nature as depraved and corrupted,

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[8] As Fairer has noted, the literature of sentiment "is interested in those moments when the transfer between mind and matter is made. Whether they are moments of sexual excitement or spiritual intimacy, imbued with sensual magic or endowed with spiritual grace (ideally both together), they are treasured by the 'man of feeling'[...]" (Fairer 1999: 136).

[9] During the eighteenth century, travel was considered as a cure for melancholy. The brilliant Augustan Age concealed the curse of the *Spleen*, known as the eighteenth-century malady. After his visit to England in 1726, Voltaire declared: "la philosophie, la liberté et le climat conduisent a la misanthropie: Londres, qui n'a point de Tartufes, est plein de Timons." Sir William Temple blamed the "many sudden changes of our weather in all seasons of the year [which] makes us unequal in our humours, inconstant in our passions, uncertain in our ends, and even in our desires" (quoted by Doughty 1926: 257, 258).

but also any kind of alienating macro-theory which might try to restrain the creative potential of the artist. In its application to literature, the concept of 'spleen' could be defined as "the authority of the negative, dwelling constantly on the limits, on the impossibility of literature" (Hassan 1982: 19). Writing against spleen implies the literary recovery of an optimistic faith in the greatness of human nature. Smollett's *Travels through France and Italy* are, by contrast, charged with negativity. In Letter VIII, Smollett describes himself as a truly splenetic traveller, with "a grey mourning frock under a wide great coat, a bob wig without powder, a very large laced hat, and a meagre, wrinkled, discontented countenance" (Smollett 1981: 70). He "cannot enjoy" the pleasures of his travels (ib. 88), and this pessimism results in the creation of a monologic text which mostly contains "dry subjects [...] such as the countr[ies] afford" (ib. 144). Out of his vivid, humanistic interest in all sides of life, Yorick criticises Smelfungus's attitude:

> The learned Smelfungus travelled from Boulogne to Paris — from Paris to Rome — and so on — but he set out with the spleen and jauntice, and every object he pass'd by was discoloured or distorted — He wrote an account of them, but 'twas nothing but the account of his miserable feelings. I met Smelfungus in the grand portico of the Pantheon — he was just coming out of it — *'Tis nothing but a huge cock-pit*, said he — I wish you had said nothing worse of the Venus of Medicis, replied I — for in passing through Florence, I had heard he had fallen foul upon the goddess, and used her worse than a common strumpet, without the least provocation in nature. (Sterne 1984: 29)

Sterne travelled to France for his health which, while being as deplorable as Smollett's, did not affect his gaiety. In Cash's opinion, "of every city he made a peep-show, of every village a fair." He refers to the lyrical fact that Sterne devoted the last years of his life to making "sentimental love to sickly women" (Cash 1992: 221, 222). In fact, he turned his physical debilitation into a "yearning for renewal through connection with others" (Kraft 1996: 106), and with the 'forbidden *otherness*' too. Smollett's obsession with his vulnerable health permeates the microcosmos of *Travels through France and Italy*, and it is turned — whether consciously or unconsciously — into a rejection of literary vitality. The initial image that he inserts soon

after his arrival in Boulogne, in which he appears as "seized with a violent cough, attended with a fever, and stitches in [his] breast" (Smollett 1981: 13), pervades the atmosphere of the *Travels*. Yorick chooses to immortalise in his text a different type of vulnerability: his condition of being an outsider with respect to the dehumanised beliefs of a dominant culture. When he meets the Count de B**** (who should provide him with a passport) he introduces himself by taking up *Hamlet* and laying his finger upon Yorick (Sterne 1984: 85). He considers himself an outsider because the world could not bear the idea that Yorick, a jester, could preach sermons too. Both facets seemed incompatible:[10] "the Yorick your lordship thinks of [...] flourish'd in Horwendillus's court — the other Yorick is myself, who have flourish'd my lord in no court" (ib. 87).

Yorick, who took vital strength from literature, from his liberating *Journey*, pitied Smelfungus, "the man who can travel from *Dan* to *Beersheba*, and cry, 'Tis all barren — and so it is; and so is the world to him who will not cultivate the fruits it offers" (ib. 28). In Smollett's opinion, the air of Boulogne "encourages putrefaction" (ib. 22), and Michael Angelo "drew his Jesus on the Cross, from the agonies of some vulgar assassin expiring on the wheel" (ib. 272). Creating a fresher form of literature, as vital as life, required a literary sensibility capable of apprehending the interesting values hidden in every physical object or event — however prosaic they may be. Yorick declares that even if he were in a desert, "[he] would find out wherewith in it to call forth [his] affections" (Sterne 1984: 28). In the *Journal to Eliza*, he had already declared his intention of "turning the world into a thousand Shapes to enjoy it" (ib. 145). This is the reason why *A Sentimental Journey* emerges as a 'novel of situations,' or isolated episodes, with no coherent argument or clear formal structure: situations are conceived as "the lucky adaptation of minds and bodies to a set of circumstances, which produces both ideas and signs."

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[10] Sterne was an Anglican priest, and his sermons were provocatively signed under the name of Mr Yorick. Keymer has noted that Sterne adopted remarkable strategies to bring his life and his writings close together, such as his promotional impersonations of Tristram and Yorick, or his appearance in the salons of Paris as the 'Chevalier Shandy', amounting to a highly visible form of performance art, through which Sterne's social existence became an extension of his fictional text. Even the name bestowed on his Yorkshire house ('Shandy Hall') was enlisted as part of this performance (Keymer 2002: 155).

Yorick's happiness (as opposed to Smollett's sterile *spleen*) seems "to stand in direct proportion to the number of ideas that these situations promote" (Lamb 1980: 290, 295). To Yorick, the flux of contingency becomes self-fulfilling (Chadwick 1978: 199). He acknowledges the superiority of life with respect to artificial, normative principles when he declares that he is "govern'd by circumstances — [he] cannot govern them" (Sterne 1984: 78). He can only pay homage to the magic essence of life through literature.

Prescriptive travel narratives provided thick descriptions of the habits of foreign countries, so as to warn readers against the dangers of the unknown. Smollett continuously compares the habits of the countries he visits with those of England. The detention of his books causes him to speak about the *droit d'aubaine*, so unfavourable to strangers, by which, "if a foreigner dies in France, the king seizes all his effects, even though his heir should be upon the spot" (Smollett 1981: 9). Yorick, paying homage to the unexpected, magic essence of life from his literary text, substitutes the portrait of these habits by the description of 'extraordinary circumstances.' The sensibility of the sentimental traveller is rewarded with them. Yorick highlights that these "accident[s] of good fortune [...] will never happen to any traveller, but a sentimental one" (Sterne 1984: 81). By sentimental, he meant completely open to the sensuality of life, without any restrictions. A certain Sunday, in Paris, La Fleur appears with "a little print of butter upon a currant leaf" and "a sheet of waste paper to put betwixt the currant leaf and his hand." When Yorick finishes the butter, he realises that what he has in his hands is, actually, a literary fragment "in the old French of Rabelais's time [which] might have been wrote by him" (ib. 102).

The only rhetorical principle guiding the composition of *A Sentimental Journey* is the principle of 'translation,' by means of which real life is immortalised in the literary text without any ideological intermediaries other than the personal set of beliefs of the writer. As Chadwick has argued, in *A Sentimental Journey*, the translation is simply the enactment of a process of self-definition through literature, the process by which Yorick vitalises his relation to the world he experiences (Chadwick 1978: 197, 199). When Yorick walks along the streets, he "go[es] translating all the way; and have more than once stood behind in the circle, where not three words have been said, and have brought off twenty different dialogues with [him],

which [he] could have fairly wrote down and sworn to" (Sterne 1984: 57). In an age in which novels were thick with descriptions of how they should be read and interpreted, Yorick offers to his readers sensualist, unfinished episodes which they can translate (and complete) in their own way. As Lamb has noted, the importance of a fictional event in *A Sentimental Journey* must be measured "in terms of the layered ideas it creates [...] not in terms of any dramatic outcome (Lamb 1980: 297). Yorick's sensualist episodes, as when he is feeling the pulse of a *grisset* in Paris, simply suggest meanings. He starts stories which will never be finished, and he stretches out his hand to touch *the other*, the unknown, the forbidden, the liberating. Sometimes his hand is left suspended in mid-air, as if waiting for his readers' collaboration, for the contributions of their imagination. This is how *A Sentimental Journey* ends, inflamed with the desire of an eternal replenishment. It emerges as a consciously unfinished journey with no concrete destination. A journey of liberation which could never take the reader back to England.

Against the rigidity of the Augustan anthropology, Yorick conceives the imaginative experience as a source of moral improvement and pleasure (Kraft 1996: 118). His journey, thus, seems to be dedicated to the readers' imagination and, accordingly, takes place in an imaginative, symbolic landscape. Smollett, by contrast, addresses his physical travels "to [his] society in general" and, specially, "to one individual of it" (Smollett 1981: 63). He confines the reader to the limits of a physical, realistic landscape. The dates inserted at the beginning of every letter crucify his text in the past and, in order to impart a stronger sense of reality, a register of the weather in France and Italy concludes his finished travels. Yorick does not want to finish his text. As Kavanagh has noted, he does not want to reach the final end because that implies the death of the text, which is symbolic of death itself and, stepping back from the persona Yorick to the author Sterne, we find a man travelling in France to avoid or postpone death. The text of his book and the text of his life overlap (Kavanagh 1992: 140).

Smollett started on his journey due to his physical needs. As he states at the beginning, he hoped that "the mildness of climate would prove favourable to the weak state of [his] lungs" (Smollett 1981: 2). The reasons why he decides to take a route or another are equally physical. He is determined to fly to the south of France to "have the pleasure of seeing the vintage" (ib. 15) and, although he intended to

stay in Lyon longer, "the enormous expence of living [...] determined [him] to set out in a day or two for Montpellier" (ib. 71). Yorick, by contrast, starts on his journey guided by a symbolic impulse to know more about certain French habits. This impulse, metaphor of Yorick's desire for knowledge, took place during the morning and, in the afternoon, "he had sat down to [his] dinner upon a fricassee'd chicken so incontestably in France, that had [he] died that night of an indigestion, the whole world could not have suspended the effects of the *Droits d'aubaine*" (Sterne 1984: 3). The reasons why he decides to take one route, or another, are determined by his desire to devour life, and to immortalise it in his texts. These are his reflections after meeting the widow in Calais and realising that she will take the route to Brussels: "I will meet thee [...] fair spirit! at Brussels — 'tis only returning from Italy through Germany to Holland, by the rout of Flanders, home — 'twill scarce be ten posts out of my way; but were it ten thousand!" (Ib. 43).

The results of Smollett's travels are physical too. In letter XXIV he declares that the advantage "[he has] reaped from this climate is [his] being, in a great measure, delivered from a slow fever which used to hang about [him] and render life a burthen" (Smollett 1981: 189). His experiences in France and Italy have not enriched his world-view in a meaningful manner. Rather, he considers that his journey back to England will "remove [him] from a place in which [he] leave[s] nothing but the air" (ib. 302). The result of Yorick's journey is the creation of a liberated text in which he can dramatise every facet of his humaneness and, consequently, there is no sense of exhaustion at the end of the novel: "Just heaven!" — he exclaims — "it would fill up twenty volumes — and alas! I have but a few small pages left to croud it into" (Sterne 1984: 113). Yorick will always hold very tight to the liberating power of literature. When he has problems with his passport — that is, with his official existence — he goes out to read Shakespeare's *Much Ado about Nothing*:

> When my way is too rough for my feet, or too steep for my strength, I get off it, to some smooth velvet path which fancy has scattered over with rose-buds of delights; and having taken a few turns in it, come back strengthen'd and refresh'd — When evils press sore upon me, and there is no retreat from them in this world, then I take a new course — I leave it [...]. (Ib. 87)

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Ernesto Bark, un visionario de Europa

DOLORES THION SORIANO-MOLLÁ

A juzgar por el perfil actual del concepto de Europa, y en particular, el de la Unión Europea, tal vez Ernesto Bark fuera menos exaltado y fantasioso de lo que se le tildó cuando divulgaba sus proyectos internacionalistas a finales del siglo XIX. Los quiméricos proyectos de Ernesto Bark emanaron del concurso de circunstancias personales y la coyuntura histórica que fue marco de su existencia, de las ideas y valores que la enriquecieron en los diferentes escenarios desde las provincias estonias de la Antigua Rusia imperial hasta España, su patria de adopción.

Si la figura de Bark encarna al hombre europeo es porque supera los límites y fronteras políticas de Europa para adscribirse en el espacio abstracto, conceptual e impreciso del cosmopolitismo e internacionalismo. Es un espacio, no obstante, operativo en el paradigma socio-político y cultural en los años gozne entre los siglos XIX y XX porque aúna y a la vez trasciende el concepto de nación, estado e imperio. En ese espacio de representación se asocian y desarrollan fuerzas o centros de interés afines entre los diferentes pueblos europeos. Las corrientes internacionalistas nacen de la analogía — en el respeto de la diversidad — y constituyen fuerzas de cohesión que participan en la creación del concepto de identidad europea actual. Precisamente, a partir de los Internacionalismos y los referentes europeos, Ernesto Bark construirá un arquitrabado proyecto de República Social para la Modernidad, anunciando de algún modo

la construcción europea que germinará en nuestra Historia presente. Descubramos primero quién era Ernesto Bark[1].

Ernesto Bark, un itinerario biográfico internacionalista

El itinerario biográfico de Ernesto Bark responde al de una vida azarosa y peculiar. Su curso fluye a través de diferentes países europeos, lo cual, potenciará un sentimiento supranacional en el marco de una Europa unitaria, occidental y oriental a la vez. Esta condición personal es uno de los prolegómenos para la asunción del cosmopolitismo y la divulgación de una conciencia o identidad europea.

Ernesto Mauricio Enrique (Ernst Moritz Heinrich) Bark nació en Kaava, cerca de Tartu en la actual Estonia, el día 23 de Marzo de 1858, en el seno de una familia de la pequeña aristocracia balto-germana. Recibió una esmerada educación, aunque pronto se destacó, benjamín entre seis hermanos, por su carácter rebelde e inconstante. Mientras estudiaba Economía y Comercio en la Escuela Politécnica de Riga participó en los Movimientos del despertar estonio, impulsado más por la lucha antizarista que por las reivindicaciones nacionalistas estonias. Animado por el mismo ímpetu, se alistó al ejército en 1877, pensando que la guerra de Turquía serviría de baluarte para derrocar la oligarquía zarista, pero como la mayoría de los jóvenes que vieron frustrados sus sueños, acabó desertando.

Bark prosiguió sus estudios de Historia, Filosofía, Política y Sociología en las Universidades alemanas de Leipzig, Munich y Berlín. Los estudios de las incipientes ciencias de sociología y psicología de las naciones, así como las doctrinas y prácticas políticas — el marxismo, el *kulturkampf* y el Imperialismo alemán — fueron decisivos en su formación intelectual. Para llevar a cabo el estudio de psicología de las naciones viajó por toda Europa. En Suiza, en contacto con los exiliados anarquistas y federalistas — fundó el periódico clandestino

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[1] Esteban, J. y Zahareas. A.1988, González Martel, J. M. 2003, González Herrán, J. M. 1988, González Herrán, J. M. y Thion Soriano-Mollá, D. 2000, González Martel, J. M. 2003, Phillips, A. W. 1989 y 1994, Talvet, J. 1985, 1992 y 1997, Thion Soriano-Mollá, D. 1995, 1998ª,1998ª, 2000, 2002 y 2003, Sawa, A. 1910, Vallina, P. 1963, Zamora Vicente, A. 1993

Der Baltische föderalist —, que será la causa de su deportación a Siberia en 1883.

A este "demonio con barbas rojas" e "intensos ojos azules", el amor le condujo de nuevo a España a finales de 1884, para casarse con Matilde Cabello García, madre de sus seis hijos. En Madrid, trabajó como corresponsal del *Köln Zeitung* y el *National Zeitung* de Berlín, antes de fundar periódicos internacionales como *Deustche-Spanisch Revue* (1886), *Spanien* (1898–1899), *Correspondance latine* (1890) u otros de carácter local como *El Crisol* (1890), *Cartagena Moderna* (1888); o las más ambiciosos *La Democracia Social* (1890 y 1895), y Germinal (1897); todos de novedosa índole político-cultural y de tendencia republicana progresista. Sus colaboraciones figuran en periódicos del mismo cariz: *Las Dominicales del Librepensamiento, La Piqueta, El País, El Radical, El Pandemonium, Nuestro Tiempo* y *El Mundo*, entre otros. La visión cosmopolita y globalizadora determina el amplio elenco de temas privilegiados en sus columnas de la prensa: el socialismo internacional, la defensa del pensamiento libre, el anticlericalismo, la reforma política y social, la Unión Republicana-Socialista, la moral social, la educación, la sociabilidad, la condición femenina, la profesionalización de la prensa, la función social del arte, la crítica literaria etc.

Participó en polémicas y diatribas políticas, en particular en contra de Pablo Iglesias y Federico Urales. Defendía un ideario político republicano-socialista aunque acabó militando en el Partido Radical de Lerroux hacia 1910. Sus preocupaciones quedaron siempre enmarcadas en un ámbito regeneracionista e internacionalista. Participó en la fundación de la Universidad Popular, la Asociación de Padres, la Casa del Pueblo y la Bibliotecas Populares. Por su condición de políglota, trabajó como traductor y profesor de idiomas en el Ateneo o en su propia academia, el Instituto Políglota, hasta su óbito en 1924.

Ernesto Bark, identificándose con la complicada historia de los Países Bálticos, gustó de variados gentilicios para presentarse. Solía denominarse livonés, "el letón revolucionario", según Pío Baroja; cuando no, decía ser ruso, polaco, alemán... y español de adopción. La aureola de incertidumbre que se creó en torno a su nacionalidad es contradictoria -pero no por ello exenta de interés- porque traduce la manera en que el individuo es percibido o se percibe a sí mismo y se posiciona frente a los demás. Los testimonios en memorias y

recuerdos demuestran cierta ambivalencia o cierta incapacidad a la hora de identificar a este "exiliado venido de tierras lejanas" porque todos seleccionan — y seleccionamos — por el referente más inmediato, la nacionalidad. Bark definía su multiculturalidad, valga el neologismo, ante todo por adición de las variadas nacionalidades que podía encarnar: "la alemana etnográficamente, la rusa por política (y por desgracia) y la española por afirmación y amor" (1888: VII). En función de las circunstancias políticas personales — exilio o expulsión de España- o de los temas tratados, Bark operaba con comodidad con unas nacionalidades u otras. Bark confesaba, por ejemplo, que se sentía particularmente alemán porque disponía de mayor libertad "para juzgar los asuntos rusos, y como alemán de las provincias bálticas de Rusia", podía "profundizar en las cuestiones y conocimientos del país y del idioma". Por ende, utilizaba ambas nacionalidades a la hora de juzgar España. Es decir, que todo se podía resolver bajo la autoridad y distancia que le proporcionaba el concepto de cosmopolita, con el que sin embargo, asume la diferencia e incluso el desarraigo[2].

La apropiación de diversas identidades nacionales, el poliglotismo y los viajes de estudios facilitan el aperturismo ideológico para ubicarse, por encima de las fronteras geográficas o políticas, en su espacio de experiencia personal, que Bark proyectaba en un utópico orden universal. En un principio, dada la impronta de su educación alemana, el concepto que Bark privilegiaba es el de cosmopolita, herencia de la Ilustración francesa y de la lectura que de dicho concepto ofrecieran filósofos como Kant o sus literatos predilectos como Goethe o Heine. Ahora bien, ser cosmopolita, ser universalista, se traduce en el lenguaje actual como ser europeo; o sea, identificarse como miembro de todos los lugares que configuran el "Viejo Continente" desde el punto de vista ideológico y cultural. Observemos que el pensamiento de Rousseau sigue prevaleciendo: "Il n'y a plus aujourd'hui de Français, d'Allemands, d'espagnols, d'Anglais même, quoi qu'on en dise; il n' y a plus que des Européens. Tous ont les mêmes goûts, les mêmes passions, les mêmes moeurs, parce qu'aucun n'a reçu de formes nationales par une institution particulière." (Rousseau 1982: 36)

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[2] La supuesta neutralidad de sus observaciones aumenta cuando insitía en su rango de "Obscuridad anónima" o "Heráclito el oscuro".

Por la proximidad étnica, por encima de las diferencias en la psicología nacional, Europa es un espacio común, de variados e históricos mapas políticos; es el tradicional detentor del saber y la cultura desde los tiempos Antiguos[3]. Europa nunca mira más allá de sus confines geográficos pues hace total abstracción de ellos. Si el concepto de hombre o ciudadano europeo no se consigna, es porque todavía no se ha sentido la necesidad de definirse frente a algo u oponerse a algo; y en particular, porque se carece de instituciones políticas supranacionales que respalden dicho concepto. Además, los fundamentos del cosmopolitismo evolucionarán en el propio espacio de la contradicción asumiendo los imperialismos hasta fluctuar en la idea más pragmática de los internacionalismos, como desarrollaremos a continuación.

Del cosmopolitismo pangermanista al internacionalismo europeo

Ernesto Bark encarna la complejidad y contradicción de las ideas políticas y sociales en torno al cosmopolitismo de origen alemán. En él, confluye el cosmopolitismo ilustrado universalista junto con el cosmopolitismo romántico, el cual, sobrepone la idea de Nación a la de Estado. Según Duroselle, el cosmopolitismo universalista permanece vivo en Alemania durante más tiempo que en otros países dada la particular organización política estatal. En el cosmopolitismo universalista defendido por Kant, Schiller, Goethe... prevalece el individualismo como rasgo inherente al alma alemana. Frente a él, Herder divulga un pensamiento nacionalista, el de la recuperación del *Volk,* la comunidad nacional que cada individuo integra con el aprendizaje de su lengua materna. Estos dos conceptos, cosmopolitismo e individualismo serán divulgados por Ernesto Bark, como rasgos modelos del hombre de la Modernidad. Aunque resulte contradictorio, Bark rechaza el concepto de nación — una entidad artificial- que ha de ser

[3] Tal vez sería interesante recordar la clásica referencia de Voltaire: "les peuples d'Europe ont des principes d'humanité qui ne se trouvent point dans les autres parties du monde. Il sont plus liés entre eux. Ils ont des lois qui leur sont communes; toutes les maisons des souverains sont alliées; leurs sujets voyagent continuellement et entretiennent une liaison réciproque" (Voltaire, 1745)

superada y aniquilada gracias a la cooperación de todos los hombres de todos los países. Como tantos otros intelectuales coetáneos, este cosmopolitismo sentimental, pacifista e idealista, no le impide, al mismo tiempo, esgrimir opiniones nacionalistas.

Estas iniciales inquietudes cosmopolitas de Ernesto Bark quedan consignadas en sus primeras obras escritas en alemán: *Russlands Culturbedeutung. Betrachtungen eines Deutsch-Livlanders* (Berlín, 1882), traducido al español bajo el título *El nihilismo y la política rusa* (Barcelona, 1882*), Wanderungen in Spanien und Portugal* (Berlín, 1883*), Der Spanisch-deutsche Konflikt um die Karolinen und die Revolution in Spanien* (Hagen, 1885) y *Deutschlands Weltstellung und Aufgabe des Deutschen im Auslande* (Zurich, 1890). Estos primeros análisis de política internacional y psicología social son esencialmente pangermanistas. Alemania se proyecta como un modelo de sociedad de progreso con una función civilizadora. Bark, como corresponsal internacional, se proyecta a su vez como enlace cultural para estrechar las relaciones internacionales y acercar España al hegemónico Imperio alemán.

En este periodo pangermanista, Bark analiza cada uno de los aspectos de la psicología y de la política germana susceptibles de estrechar las relaciones entre las principales naciones europeas. Es obvio que las circunstancias históricas orientan sus juicios frente a Francia. A la política internacional se sobrepone la idea de raza, que escinde Europa entre germanos y latinos. Aunque prevalece la creencia en la supremacía del "genio alemán" frente la decadente raza latina, Bark pronostica el equilibrio en los caracteres por la naturaleza complementaria de ambas razas, atendiendo sobre todo a italianos y españoles. La sal "ática", la pasión y la acción se conjugan perfectamente con la profundidad, serenidad y el rigor germano, por citar un ejemplo[4].

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[4] Los franceses son conscientes, según Bark, de la falta de originalidad creadora, de su decadencia cultural, cuyo reflejo más inmediato es la vida depravada de París, capital de la latinidad. Bark, construye una imagen destructiva de la misma como lugar de perdición, inmersa en un materialismo corrompido. París es una Babel moderna, el *templo de Venus* del mundo civilizado que ejerce una atracción irresistible en todos los pueblos del universo. París ha dejado de ser la capital del ser poético y creador ya que en ella dominan la crítica negativa y la ironía. Ambas ejercen influencias nefastas sobre los individuos que no salvaguardan su independencia

La hegemonía política, espiritual y cultural del Imperio alemán contrasta con la incompleta y tendenciosa influencia internacional de las demás potencias europeas. Para Bark, Francia representa la arrogancia, superficialidad y decadencia, simbolizadas todavía con la imagen de la monarquía de Luis XIV. La hegemonía italiana es específicamente artística por carecer de una política de talla. Sobre los ingleses pesa un acendrado materialismo mercantilista. Por último, los españoles viven anclados en un pasado civilizador que no han sabido actualizar (Bark 1890: 106). Por consiguiente, el equilibrio de las tres esferas hegemónicas — política, espiritual y cultural — erigen el Imperio alemán en árbitro de la política mundial y pionero de la construcción de la fraternidad. Recordando a Fichte, Bark considera al pueblo alemán — individualista, cosmopolita, culto, sereno- especialmente apto para la lucha por la libertad y el progreso, lo cual refuerza su papel de guía internacional. En suma, Alemania ha de encaminar a los pueblos hacia la fraternidad propuesta como internacional o universal. Para ello, Bark confía en el derrocamiento de las monarquías, la desaparición del militarismo y el clericalismo y el triunfo de la democracia en un marco reformista europeo.

El concepto de cosmopolitismo que Bark esgrime en sus textos une influencia política con influencia cultural, para sustituir al cosmopolitismo francés en el que ambas esferas habían funcionado por separado[5]. El carácter socio-político con el que se enriquece el cosmopolitismo es propio de la coyuntura, puesto que la Revolución científica e industrial introdujo nuevas variantes en el paradigma europeo: el desarrollo de las comunicaciones, el transporte, la expansión económica, la creación de los grandes bancos, las empresas y el comercio de rango internacional... Asimismo, la apología al socialismo alemán, del que ofrece una visión marcadamente romántica, constituye otra de las claves fundamentales para el desarrollo del cosmopolitismo moderno. Paulatinamente, el cosmopolitismo es

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espiritual, cuya existencia mundana y superficial se rige por intereses pecuniarios y placenteros; en (Bark 1890: 69–74)

[5] Como desarrolla Gerard Soulier, durante la Ilustración, el francés erigió en lengua cultural, sustituyendo al latín. El esplendor de su desarrollo intelectual no es equiparable con el político. Recuérdese que a raíz del tratado de Utrech (1713) Francia pierde su hegemonía política mientras que merced al Tratado de Rastadt (1714), el francés es instaurado como lengua diplomática hasta el siglo XX. (Soulier 1994: 120)

equiparado o sustituido por el Internacionalismo, término clave del ideario socialista, como el aforismo que concluye el *Manifiesto del partido comunista* de Marx y Engels: "Proletarios de todos los países, ¡uníos!".

Bark define el internacionalismo como una fuerza o corriente de poder internacional, que él analiza en el marco europeo. Simbólicamente, los principales actores del poder en política interior y exterior son tres: la internacional del oro o capitalista, la internacional negra o religioso-clerical, la internacional roja o democrático-social. Las dos primeras configuran las fuerzas corruptoras que controlan la vida económica y financiera. La tercera, la Internacional roja "la inteligencia colectiva de las masas", representa la promesa de futuro de los movimientos socialistas como sustituta de la Internacional negra. La Internacional roja es, en palabras de Bark:

> La Internacional de la democracia, la fraternidad de los pueblos, el culto a la Justicia, Solidaridad y Libertad. Resultante de dos mil años de civilización europea no puede identificarse con los estrechos sectarismos de tal o cual escuela económica, política o religiosa (ib. 10–11).

El Internacionalismo rojo es una corriente civilizadora que apela a la colaboración de intelectuales y proletarios estimulados "por el aliento vivificador de la libertad". Libertad, insiste, "de conciencia, política y organizativa" (Bark 1902: 6–11 y 1903: 231–240 y 260–263). En la conquista del poder, el Internacionalismo rojo, "inteligencia colectiva de las masas", ha de ser integrador de todas las tendencias progresistas sin sectarismo de escuela para proponer la reforma — y no la revolución- de las sociedades.

A partir de estas primeras bases internacionalistas, Ernesto Bark desarrolla un proyecto de Política social que elabora en una enjundiosa bibliografía en español (1900–1907). Su originalidad reside en ser el:

> primer ensayo para resumir toda la ciencia sociológica basado sobre el conocimiento completo de la bibliografía respectiva francesa, española, italiana, portuguesa, inglesa y rusa; bibliografía que facilitará el estudio independiente para los que quieran seguir rumbos diversos (Bark 1890: 5).

Se estructura en torno al modelo de República, que el consigna Social, por fundamentarse en los estudios sociales, en el desarrollo de un socialismo reformista — de corte proudhoniano — y de carácter científico al que designa como Socialismo positivo. Los estudios de psicología de las Naciones que Bark emprendiera con sus viajes resultan esenciales puesto que sistematizan los factores determinantes de los caracteres de los pueblos y su influencia en todos los órdenes de la existencia. La Psicología de las Naciones permite, por lo tanto, analizar la adecuación de las reformas propuestas por la Estadística Social y anuncia los derroteros de la política internacional. En sus interpretaciones subyace, no obstante, el trasfondo darwinista de la época, de modo que cualquier análisis social puede quedar respaldado por presupuestos supuestamente biológicos. La impronta de Chamberlain es evidente cuando, por ejemplo, Bark reconoce en el internacionalismo o cosmopolitismo moderno el carácter competitivo vital, la exacerbación nacionalista y la carrera imperialista[6]; los cuales se rigen por relaciones de explotación. Empero, el Socialismo científico convertiría les relaciones de explotación en relaciones de solidaridad utilitarista, erradicando el concepto paternalista de fraternidad.

El modelo de República Social que Bark proyecta se sustenta en los principios de democracia, libertad, progreso y solidaridad. Estos principios de orden universalista se circunscriben en la práctica al Antiguo Continente, ya que Bark defiende la supremacía de la raza blanca en nombre del progreso y la libertad, pero en especial, porque históricamente ha sido "el fermento progresivo", "en medio de civilizaciones petrificadas o detenidas en su infancia" (Bark 1903: 273–274 y 1907: 30). Observemos que la raza blanca o lo que llamaron la Europa de América, no formaba parte del paradigma.

Del reconocimiento de modos, costumbres, ideas y valores de la civilización europea, de un imaginario o de una representación colectiva, vamos a asistir a la prefiguración de estructuras e instituciones necesarias para el control, el desarrollo del poder y del capital cuando las ideas de nación, estado e imperio pierden su estabilidad tradicional. Si la identidad nacionalista e imperialista se define por el

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[6] La obra de Chamberlain, *The foundations of the Ninetennth Century* (1899) tuvo gran acogida en Alemania al estrechar conceptos tales como racismo e imperialismo desde un punto de vista social-darwinistas (Núñez 1969: 49)

reconocimiento de sí mismo y frente al otro en un espacio cerrado por fronteras, el internacionalismo abre los espacios, de modo que la identidad nacional formará parte — sin por ello desaparecer — de una entidad superior — europea o universalista —[7]. Paulatinamente, la Europa histórica y antropológica — tesoro y fermento de civilización — será vislumbrada como una Europa política, económica y cultural en la que las identidades nacionalistas se diluyen en una identidad común, en unos rasgos compartidos o complementarios, en unas instancias organizativas que recogen los mínimos comunes de cada nación. En la obra de Ernesto Bark, todo ello se traduce en la apropiación de conceptos cercanos pero de ningún modo homólogos. Son conceptos fluctuantes e imprecisos por las mismas circunstancias coyunturales en que surgen o se utilizan. Pese al carácter mundial, universalista que pretende otorgar a los nuevos modelos socio-políticos, su definición se establece desde y para el marco de referencia conocido y al que abiertamente se le atribuye una autoridad histórica. El juego de fuerzas entre nacionalismos e imperialismos en esos sueños internacionalistas prepara, en este sentido, la identidad europea.

La República Social nace del concierto y la participación de las principales naciones europeas: Inglaterra, Francia, Alemania, Italia, España y Rusia. Para la construcción de este paradigma internacionalista, Bark selecciona dos criterios fundamentales; a saber, el carácter precursor y la especificidad del cosmopolitismo de cada una de ellas. El análisis de la psicología nacional, las relaciones de política exterior y el particular desarrollo socialista completarán puntualmente sus estudios. A modo de ilustración, apuntaremos sucintamente algunos de los rasgos más significativos del Internacionalismo que Bark recaba.

En opinión de Bark, el internacionalismo moderno se construye a partir de las ideas fuerza de la civilización de los pueblos precursores; o sea, los pueblos latinos entre los que destaca a España, Italia y

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[7] Se trata de la definición por la imagen en el espejo, como desarrolla Dominique Wolton en *Naissance de l'Europe Démocratique, la dernière utopie*, Paris: Flammarion, 1993. Esa imagen que por oposición refleja el otro, ese espacio de alteridad contribuyen a la propia definición: "l'identité se construit moins dans le rapport à soi et à l'identique que dans le rapport à l'autre et dans la différence, définie tout à la fois par l'autre et contre l'autre", Bromberger, Christian, "Entre le local et le global: les figures d'identité" (Segalen 1989: 141)

Francia como tesoro de los valores y tradiciones de Occidente. La Antigüedad clásica, la civilización latina y el imperialismo romano son los referentes históricos de la civilización que renacen entre los socialistas y republicanos para preparar el advenimiento de la Revolución Social. El carácter internacionalista de Francia emana en particular de la Revolución, "cuna del socialismo latino", por su influencia en el devenir de la política y las ideas en Europa. La psicología del pueblo francés — superficialidad, entusiasmo, impresionabilidad, vanidad... —, el desfase entre sus grandes pensadores y el contexto socio-políticos son, según Bark, causas parciales del fracaso de la Revolución,

> ¿Qué tiene que agradecer Europa a aquella Revolución? ¿Es ésta, causa de sus libertades políticas o ha sido la causa de cincuenta años de retraso? ¿Debemos seguir el camino trazado por Danton y Robespierre o debemos rechazar sus crímenes y exageraciones como el mayor peligro para la libertad y el progreso? (Bark 1890:3)

La Revolución francesa no ha de servir de ejemplo a la Revolución Social, la cual, ha de trabajar en aras a la educación y concienciación de las masas populares. El socialismo científico y humanista interesan de modo particular a Bark por su influencia en España, sobre todo la figura de Pedro José Proudhon.

Las relaciones comerciales e industriales son las fuerzas coetáneas para el desarrollo cosmopolita, las cuales están ampliamente desarrolladas en Inglaterra y Rusia. En Inglaterra, la "Cartago Moderna", domina la Internacional del oro dado su fuerte desarrollo industrial, comercial y colonialista. Las organizaciones cooperativas, *Trade Unions*, podían haber sido un precedente del socialismo europeo. En Rusia, los *mir,* los *artels* y los Consejos Comunales son entidades colectivistas favorables al advenimiento de la Revolución Social, pese a sus circunstancias socio-históricas desfavorables y a la pasividad que caracteriza al pueblo ruso. Alemania, es estudiada como cuna de la Internacional Socialista de ámbito europeo por el marxismo y las demás tendencias moderadas como las propuestas por Eduardo Bernstein. Bark las recogió armonizándolas con el contexto español en una homónima Agrupación que él mismo fundó, la Democracia Social. Por fin, España es el escenario idóneo para realizar los primeros ensayos de República Social, por el compromiso efectivo del propagandista:

> soy naturalizado en España y tengo por lo tanto pleno derecho de exigir que progrese mi patria adoptiva. Más aún, tengo el deber de pagar hospitalidad trabajando con doble ahínco en favor de este país que no lo forman sólo oligarcas, cortesanos de toda calaña, frailes y clericalla y demás parásitos (Bark 1906: 36);

pero también por las condiciones socio-políticas y culturales de esta nación desgastada y extenuada que tenía que encontrar nuevas vías de reconstrucción. Bark alentador solía reiterar: "Renacerá España por la ciencia sociológica y el patriotismo purificado por un noble cosmopolitismo" (Bark 1890: 48). Ese renacimiento de las "energías adormecidas del pueblo español, de sus nobles virtudes", latentes desde la civilización clásica se articulará en torno a la República Social que instauraría un socialismo democrático en España y se proyectaría internacionalmente.

Europa es pues la constructora del Internacionalismo moderno y ha de aunar todas las manifestaciones que van surgiendo porque, según Bark, todas confluyen en tres grandes objetivos: la abolición de las guerras y los ejércitos, la organización de un tribunal internacional de arbitraje y la convocatoria periódica de congresos internacionales para el concierto de las naciones.

> Las guerras son realmente pretextos para conservar un cuerpo de Ejército fuerte, que tiene por fin combatir las democracias y sostener la reacción de los reyes", escribe Bark para promover el movimiento antimilitarista. Estos movimientos arraigaban en los Congresos Internacionales para la Paz. Entre ellos, se detiene, en especial, en el celebrado en 1896 en Budapest en el que se revisan los gastos humanos y financieros de las naciones europeas en la preparación de las guerras de los treinta años anteriores (Bark 1882: 80–81).

La expansión de la Internacional roja en el embrionario "Parlamento Internacional como lo soñaba Bluntschi y otros tratadistas de derechos de gentes"; así como su participación en los Congresos Interparlamentarios augura, según Bark, la "marcha hacia el progreso" porque no sólo se tratarán cuestiones de arbitraje, sino que:

> pronto se discutirán con preferencia también los problemas sociales y tal vez nacerá en su seno la primera

> legislación internacional basada en los trabajos de estadística social que tan indispensables son para determinar los senderos a la legislación del trabajo (ib. 82–83).

Bark consigna el nacimiento de los Congresos o Uniones Interparlamentarios en el Congreso Internacional de la Paz de París en 1878, por iniciativa de Edmond Tiaudière y sus sucesivas celebraciones hasta 1900, en París, Berna, Roma y La Haya en los que fue incrementando el número de países participantes. Bark solicita mayor presencia de los partidos socialistas, con el fin de iniciar una organización internacional "sencilla, económica y eficaz"; que en suma, vendría a ser precedente de una construcción efectiva de Europa para su proyección universal.

Apoyándose en los avances tecnológicos, la revolución industrial, los medios de comunicación y utilizando la estrategia educativa, el Socialismo positivo homogeneizará, uniformizará el saber y los valores universales, de modo que todo el mundo pueda, "en teoría", compartir el mismo sistema de pensamiento, las mismas escalas de valores y objetivos. Bark pronosticaba que una mayor circulación de ideas favorecería el comportamiento solidario de todos los individuos puesto que el progreso se construye no sólo a partir de los avances técnicos y científicos, sino también a través del poder de las ideas y el ennoblecimiento moral de la sociedad. En su opinión, Revolución social y Revolución moral caminan a la par.

Por consiguiente, Bark va recensando cualquier tipo de tendencia internacionalista, desde las de índole científica, artística, literaria, técnica, agrícola a las meramente caritativos. Entre ellas, Bark atribuye especial importancia a la del feminismo internacional. Las reivindicaciones sobre la condición de la mujer en la sociedad contemporánea merecen una atención cuidadosa, en particular, respecto de las mujeres del Sur de Europa. La liberación de la mujer, la educación, la integración en la vida social activa, la independencia económica y social, el derecho al voto, la igualdad jurídica son algunos de los objetivos comunes de la Internacional feminista (Bark 1902, 1903, 1907). En ellos fundamenta Bark la reforma social puesto que la mujer es un agente primordial de propaganda en aras al desarrollo de una nueva sociabilidad. Por último, Bark piensa que el Internacionalismo librepensador puede contribuir a derrocar las tradicionales fronteras religiosas. El primer Congreso Internacional de Librepensadores se celebró en 1880, según consigna Bark, en Bélgica,

por iniciativa del líder socialista Cesar Paepe[8], con importante poder de convocatoria internacional. Este tipo de Congresos da muestras de solidaridad social y se han de extender a cualquier círculo u organización (Bark 1907: 249)[9]. Bark es consciente del desfase existente entre el pueblo y las elites rectoras de las instituciones respecto del cosmopolitismo. Por ello, educar a la masa amorfa, que evoluciona lentamente, ha de ser una prioridad internacional.

Las Letras en general, y en especial la prensa, por su inmediatez, son estrategias que se deben emplear para facilitar la comprensión del individuo, la esencia nacional y las aspiraciones de cada nación[10]. Como Schlegel, Bark piensa que la tradición nacional se conserva en la literatura. Es decir, la literatura es "espejo del yo intelectual de un pueblo" (Bark 1882: 14) y conservadora de su acervo idiosincrásico. Es un organismo vivo en el proceso dialéctico de la historia, recoge el pasado e impulsa el presente hacia el futuro. Es un medio de expresión social y popular y puede ser utilizada como pedagogía social. Siguiendo a Fouillée y Guyau, Bark preconiza la difusión de la literatura para que las ideas fuerza se filtren en las conciencias" y transformen al público receptor de manera abstracta y placentera: "Una obra artística que impresiona, produce efectos revolucionarios a veces más duraderos que barricadas y batallas en las calles. La pluma es más poderosa que todos los cañones" (Bark 1901ª: 70–71, 1907ª: 196).

Con la democratización de la literatura, se podría despertar emociones y pasiones, educar la sensibilidad, elevar y adoctrinar al individuo. Esta instrumentalización de la literatura prevalece en su bibliografía y en sus colaboraciones periodísticas donde reclama con

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[8] El listado de Asociaciones de la "Paz eterna" y Asociaciones librepensadoras citadas son alemanas o austriacas.

[9] El aumento y rapidez de las comunicaciones, el transporte facilitan la solidaridad social a nivel europeo y mundial, como demuestra la "creación de la Comisión permanente contra el cólera, en Constatinopla; el Congreso Internacional sobre la peste bubónica en Venecia en 1897; el apoyo internacional en 1895 contra el hambre en Rusia y en 1897 en la India; la Conferencia Internacional Agraria de 1896 en Budapest; la creación de la Sociedad Bimetalista; los Congresos Internacionales Científicos y hasta el célebre Congreso de las Religiones en Chicago; los Congresos de la Prensa, desde el de Amberes en 1894, etc." (Bark 1900: 85)

[10] Bark lamenta la pérdida del sentimiento histórico y la tradición que configuran la identidad nacional, la memoria, de una comunidad (Bark 1982: 179)

insistencia la presencia en toda creación literaria de los ideales progresistas y los valores universales. Sus novelas, *Los Vencidos* o *La Invisible,*[11] son mera traducción en universos ficticios de su particular singladura y de sus proyectos internacionalistas.

En la práctica, como ya citamos antes, estos principios impulsan a Bark a la creación de periódicos de índole internacional para el estrechamiento de los pueblos. Sus periódicos hispano-alemanes de literatura, política y comercio que se proyectan en la educación para el internacionalismo y dando a conocer España, aislada y ajena "movimiento europeo". La *Deutsche-Spanische Revue* (1887) y *Spanien* (1898–1899) ofrecen información amplia sobre la actualidad española y destinaban numerosas páginas a la vida cultural y la creación literaria. Bark funda, como órganos de sociabilidad internacional, algunas instancias desde las que intenta estrechar los intercambios o la adaptación de extranjeros en España. Entre sus efímeros y variados proyectos, destacan por su mayor solidez, la Biblioteca Hispano-alemana, desde la que facilitaba la circulación y traducción de cualquier tipo de obras en alemán y español. En la misma línea, funda algunas asociaciones como la Sociedad Políglota o la Agrupación Democrática-Social en donde propone conferencias y debates en diversas lenguas sobre temas internacionales. Basten estas breves anotaciones sobre la efectividad de su pedagogía social como estrategia para la circulación de ideas en ese espacio europeo que Bark quiere asentar bajo la República social. Las contribuciones de la filosofía social y de las Letras en el desarrollo de una sociabilidad internacional, así como la creación de Europa desde la ficción literaria son fundamentos del proyecto social de Bark para la modernidad que por su importancia atención particularizada y se escapan de los objetivos del presente trabajo.

Bark propagandista, Bark divulgador, es el fruto de su época, "el hijo de fin de siglo y eso no peca de modestia" (Bark 1900:10–11) como solía argumentar. Bark, apóstol de los tiempos modernos, se presenta como el propagandista del cosmopolitismo y el internacionalismo, los cuales van actualizándose en el marco de la experiencia personal, el desarrollo y la difusión de las ideas para participar en la

[11] El impresor José Pueyo incluía en su catálogo de librería desde 1897 la novela de Bark, *La Invisible*, que el escritor subtitulaba al igual que *Los Vencidos*, Novela contemporánea político-social. Dicha novela nunca se ha llegado a localizar.

construcción de lo que entonces fue un quimérico o visionario paradigma europeo.

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In the Wake of Walter Benjamin

MONICA SPIRIDON

The Return of Walter Benjamin

In recent decades, we have witnessed a renewed discourse on the *flâneur* and the practices of *flânerie*, mostly due to the rediscovery of Walter Benjamin's analysis of this symbolic urban European figure. According to Benjamin, the city as an aid to historical memory opens up "the immense drama of *flânerie* that we believed to have finally disappeared." (Benjamin 1943: 40)

The activity of watchful observation in a modern metropolis is a multifaceted method of apprehending and reading a labyrinth of complex signifiers. Following not only Walter Benjamin's line of argument but also the critical stances of contemporary historians, urban theorists, anthropologists as well as sociologists, we can regard the *flâneur* as an interceder and as a performer of spatial memory.

According to the followers of Benjamin, "the *flâneur*, as embodiment of exploration traverses metropolitan modernity in search of that which is hidden: the ever-same in the new; antiquity in modernity; representatives of the real in the mythical, the past in the present and so on. But it is not merely the *flâneur* exploring the city, it is also Benjamin exploring the texts of the city, all of which are themselves as labyrinthine as the metropolis itself." (Frisby 2000: 43)

In order to evaluate things in their still remembered significance, the *flâneur* had to wrest the spatial details out of their original context — maintains the sociologist Georg Simmel. To read them means to produce new constructions, to derive more meaning from them than they possessed in their own present: "That which is written is like a city, to which the words are a thousand gateways." (Opiz 1992: 162–181)

In his well-known novel *The Crying of Lot 49*, Thomas Pynchon significantly connects these two cultural themes: spatial memory and *flânerie*. Pynchon's representation of European pre-modernity and its projection into the American present require a distinctive mode of remembering. In Pynchon's novel, the twentieth century Californian metropolis San Narcisso — a fictitious equivalent of Los Angeles — becomes a manifold projection of the European spatial memory. Even for professionals of urbanism, Los Angeles is an atypical city, a "re-creation" in all possible aspects: "a bazaar of repack-aged times and spaces. A theme park-themed paradise". (Soja 2000: 238)

Considered from this perspective, Pynchon's San Narcisso can be singled out as a Post-European city.

Oedipa Maas, the fictional protagonist of Pynchon's novel, is a *flâneur* of the contemporary mass society and an active and multifunctional agency of recollection. Her name draws us back to the genetic ground of European mythology, connecting one of its main actors, Oedipus — an inborn interpreter of riddles — to contemporary transatlantic society. The novel moves the European cultural memory into a fictitious American urban space, open to repetition and to theatrical performance. By mid-nineteenth century, the story of the famous European mail network *Torre e Tasso* (*Thurn and Taxis)* and that of its war with the mysterious outlaw Trystero has been transferred across the Atlantic and staged in Southern California, as a part-real/ part-imaginary detective plot, revolving around the Mafia type communication network: W.A.S.T.E.

To quote the urbanists, contemporary Los Angeles is a nowhere bereft of memories, a so-called "Lite City". Fiction writers such as Thomas Pynchon clearly underline this. Assigning meaning to a "Lite City" is, structurally and semiotically, a fascinating process, highlighting the ontological power of language as well as the intermingling of recollection and writing. (Ib. 247)

Trying hard to take stock and to evaluate the endowment of her deceased friend Pierce Inverarity, Oedipa realizes that gradually she is getting caught up in a totally different enterprise: rebuilding a symbolic legacy of America. Unconsciously and even against her own will she turns into the restaurateur of a significant part of the European spatial memory: the genesis of the postal network Torre et Tassis in the Holy Roman Empire:

> Omedio Tassis, banished form Milan, organized his first couriers in the Bergamo region around 1290. Some said that the name Taxis came from the Italian "*tasso*", badger, referring to hats of badger fur the early Bergamascan couriers wore. (...) From about 1300, until Bismarck bought them out in 1867, Miz Maas, they were *the* European mail service.

The urban area of San Narcisso, where Oedipa keeps strolling almost randomly day and night, bears a perfect analogy with the theoretical model of a so-called *Third Space*.[1]

As defined by Edward Soja — who seeks to understand spatiality as it is simultaneously perceived, conceived and lived — a *Third Space* is both a meeting point and a melting pot of group recollections: "As she'd guessed that first minute, in San Narcisso there were revelation in progress all around her."

Faces of Postmodern "*Flânerie*"

In order to resuscitate the European past in the urban American present Pynchon's fictitious protagonist takes on the three main functions of the modern *flâneur*, identified by Walter Benjamin: successively or simultaneously, Oedipa Maas is an *actor/ spectator*, an *archeologist* and a *detective.*

The relationship between the *flâneur* and the city is currently identified as one of estrangement. To the *flâneur,* his city represents a showplace. San Narcisso as a whole is a mentally projected space, staging a show about the build up of the Holy Roman Empire through an well-articulated network of communication.

The protagonist of The *Courier's Tragedy*, a play directed by Randolph Driblette in a theater of San Narcisso, is the young «Niccolo, masquerading as a special courier of the Thurn and Taxis (Torre et Tasso), a family who had held a postal monopoly through most of the Holy Roman Empire." Pynchon strategically blurs the

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[1] "Lived spaces, combining the perceived and the conceived, the objectively real and the subjectively imagined, things in space and thoughts about space in an expanded interpretive scope that I have described as a third space perspective." (Soja 1996: 351).

boundaries between the actors and the spectators of *The Courier's Tragedy* on the one hand, and the actors and the spectators of the living theatre of memory called San Narcisso, on the other: "The act of metaphor then was a thrust at truth and a lie, depending where you were: inside, safe, or outside. Oedipa did not know where she was." In Pynchon's novel, there are several strolling actors and strolling spectators and their status is highly ambiguous.

Newly arrived in San Narcisso — the dream factory of the movie world — Oedipa successively meets a whole bunch of actors, directors, and playwrights, not to mention several professors of theatrical creative writing and theatrical literary criticism. Pierce Inverarity's own lawyer and Oedipa's collaborator — Metzger — is a former movie star. Almost all the events occurring in Pynchon's novel can be seen as performances in the theatrical meaning of the word. *The Crying of Lot 49* comes to an end before either Oedipa or Pynchon's reader can understand more clearly if the whole plot was, or not, a shrewd and ingenious "*mise en scène*" by Pierce Inverarity, the constructor, the owner and, why not, the author of the city called San Narcisso as well as of its European memory.

It has often been pointed out that the *flâneur's* activity of observation and recording of the metropolitan space is not confined to seeing or viewing. The *flâneur* must listen carefully to stories, scraps of quotations as well as search for clues amongst the "dead data" of the metropolis or in the archives, like a historical investigator.

Therefore, the *archaeologist* as a particular *flâneur* figure emphasizes both the significance of language and of the research for traces of the past in the layers of the urban memory from the present downwards. Theorists insist upon the necessity for a hermeneutic intention in such excavations: "A good archaeological report must not only indicate the strata from which its discovered object emanates, but those others, above all which had to be penetrated: the ever-same in the new; antiquity in modernity; representatives of the real in the mythical; the past in the present and so on." (Benjamin 1999: 42)

The memory of the postal network built between the beginnings of the Holy Roman Empire and the French Revolution, that helped unify the molding European space, including Italy — the homeland of "an outlandish and fantastical race" to quote Pynchon, — has been concentrated in a theatrical plot in which the place called Lago di Pietà plays an essential part. A different layer of memories, related to

a Second World War tragedy and having as its stage the same Lago di Pietà, provides the starting point for a series of historical cross-fertilizations.

In a third move, all these overlapping recollections have eventually been relocated across the Atlantic and resumed in a somehow distorted way around the artificial lake created by Pierce Inverarity near San Narcisso:

> These bones came from Italy. A straight sale. Tony Jaguar says he harvested them all from the bottom of Lago di Pietà. Lago di Pietà was near the Tyrrhenian coast, somewhere between Naples and Rome, and had been the scene of the now ignored (in 1943 tragic) battle of attrition in a minor pocket developed during the advance on Rome. For weeks, a handful of American troops, cut off and without communications, huddled on the narrow shore of the clear and tranquil lake while form the cliffs that tilted vertiginously over the beach Germans hit them day and night with plunging, enfilading fire.

Memory often intermingles with secrecy, calling for a detective investigation.

It has been argued already that the representation of the figure of the *detective* and earlier that of the *flâneur* in mystery fiction served to reassure the reading public that the apparent chaos of impressions and the overwhelming diversity of relations and experiences in the twentieth century metropolis was both intelligible and legible. (Brand 1991)

Oedipus has been frequently seen by literary criticism as the starting point of a fictional road leading from the European Antiquity straight towards Agatha Christie's famous detective characters. If the detective is traditionally "an eye" in a story about acuities of seeing and if we accept the affinities between flânerie and detection, then "flânerie" as observation involves modes of seeing and of reading. (Grossvogel 1979: 58)

The activity of detection by the late nineteenth century was supported by the new media of communication that at the same time opened up the possibility of new forms of criminal activity. As a sophisticated individual detective, Oedipa is able to make connections in an increasingly complex and opaque milieu. It is in the labyrinth of

the masses and its interaction with the built labyrinth of the city, rather than in the empty streets of the metropolis, that secrets are revealed to Oedipa — synchronically and diachronically connecting Europe and America through manifold recollection.

Intertextual Mirrors

Acts of cultural anamnesis can be regarded as equivalents of literary inter-texts. The spaces of memory present in fictitious cities are crossroads of allusions, of inscriptions, of the extension and the transcription of primary texts. In *The Crying of Lot 49*, the most diverse texts, quotations and scraps of information are flocked together in constellations of meaning rendered possible by their similarity. In her quest of the original "Torre et Tasso story", Oedipa explores piles of manuscripts, postal stamps, magazines, old original and fake editions, turned into popular theatre, into videotapes or cartoons:

> From obscure philatelic journals furnished her by Genghis Cohen, an ambiguous footnote in Motley's Rise of the Dutch Republic, an 80-year-old pamphlet on the roots of modern anarchism, a book of sermons by Blobb's brother Augustine also among Bortz's Wharfingeriana, along with Blobb's original clues, Oedipa was able to fit together this account of how the organization began.

One of the essential records she comes across is *An Account of the Singular Peregrinations of Dr. Diocletian Blobb among the Italians, Illuminated with Exemplary Tales from the True History of That Outlandish and Fantastical Race*". Dr. Blobb's narrative bears witness to the benefit of the memory repository rebuilt piece by piece by Oedipa:

> Diocletian Blobb had chosen to traverse a stretch of desolate mountain country in a mail coach belonging to the Torre et Tassis system, which Oedipa figured must be Italian for Thurn and Taxis. Without warning, by the shores of what Blobb called "The Lake of Piety", they were set upon by a score of black-cloaked riders, who engaged them in a fierce, silent struggle in the icy wind blowing in from the lake.

During her endless rambling across the San Narcisso county, Oedipa is stubbornly fighting to restore the European memory of a vast territory, bereft of meaning and which could have been gradually transformed into a transatlantic "Waste Land". (In the name of Trystero's network W.A.S.T.E., the reference to T. S. Eliot is transparent):

> There was the true continuity. San Narcisso had no boundaries. No one knew yet how to draw them. She had dedicated herself, weeks ago, to making sense of what Inverarity had left behind, never suspecting that the legacy was America. Were the squatters there in touch with others, through Trystero; were they helping carry forward those 300 years of the house disinheritance? Surely, they'd forgotten by now what it was the Trystero were to have inherited; as perhaps Oedipa one day might have. What was left to inherit? That America, coded in Inverarity's testament, whose was that?

The backbone of Pynchon's fictitious world is provided by a rich intertextuality closely interconnected to self-reflective mirroring — two privileged tools of spatial memory. In *The Crying of Lot 49,* both San Narcisso city, the territory of Oedipa's wondering, and the motel *Eco's Courts* where she decides to settle down for a while, help resuscitate the mythological ground surrounding the story of Echo and Narcissus. Apart from this, the narcissist dimension of Pynchon's narrative is enhanced by a classical *myse en abyme.*

The centennial story of the Torre et Tasso organization and of its struggle with the Trystero usurpers is mirrored by the *Courier's Tragedy*, written by the fictitious author Richard Wharfinger. As a matter of fact, this bizarre play script is a rereading and a remembering of the American post-European history. And, at the same time, a sort of symbolic compensation for "the loss of memory and remembering that — according to Norman Klein — seems particularly intense in the geo-history of Los Angeles." (Klein 1997: 372)

In almost the same way as in Las Vegas, the urban empire built by Pierce Inverarity obviously aims at aping the Old Continent, turning everything around into mere scenery: "...the imbricate memory puzzle. They came down in a helix to a sculptured body of water

named Lake Inverarity. Out in it, a chunky, ogived and verdigrised *Art Nouveau* reconstruction of some European pleasure casino."

In this huge urban theatre, Oedipa's deceased friend seems to have decided to keep alive the American echoes of the tragic events which occurred centuries ago near the Lake of Piety: "There had been the bronze historical marker on the other side of the lake at Fangoso Lagoons. On this site, it read in 1853 a dozen Wells, Fargo men battled gallantly with a band of masked marauders in mysterious black uniforms. We owe this description to a post rider the only one to witness the massacre, who died shortly after. The only other clue was a cross, traced by one of the victims in the dust. To this day the identities of the slayers remain shrouded in mystery."

In an indirect but highly suggestive manner, Pynchon imagines a genuine bridge of memory closing the cultural gap between the two shores of the Atlantic:

"Tristoe, Tristoe, one, two, three, / Turning taxi from across the sea..." reads a childish short poem accidentally heard by Oedipa in the streets. "Thurn and Taxis, you mean?" — she concludes, emphatically underlining that for Pynchon's contemporary *flâneur* crossing the Atlantic is a symbolic passage in time that only memory is able to secure.

By Way of Conclusions

Pynchon's novel is a poignant narrative of the modern metropolis, the site of the ruins of previous orders in which European histories, memories and traces entwine continually and recombine in the construction of chaotic horizons. *The Crying of Lot 49* requires a mode of reading open to the prospect of a continual return to events, to their re-elaboration and revision, of a retelling, re-citing, and re-sitting of historical and cultural knowledge.

In Pynchon's fictitious city, the spaces of Oedipa's rambling and their intersecting networks provide the basis for an image of the metropolis as a highly complex web, verging on the chaotic (at least as far as the individual's sense perception is concerned). The lived space of Pynchon's Post-metropolis depends upon the re-calling and remembering of earlier European fragments and traces that flare up and flash in the present, as they come to live on in new constellations.

Cities have always been typical spaces of exchange, where conflicting and confusing perceptions and representations criss-crossed continually: spaces where memories have been negotiated and processed. In *The Crying of Lot 49,* memory is not an instrument for the reconnaissance of what is past but is rather its medium. The medium of what has been lived, just like the soil is the medium in which ancient spaces lie buried. Whoever tries to gaze more closely at one's own buried past must proceed like a man who excavates.

In several of his essays — notably in "Bridge and Door" — Georg Simmel already drew attention to the main dimensions of culturally projected spaces: *inside and outside* an *above and bellow*. Pynchon's city text is simultaneously intended as both an imaginative *Bridge* between the two continents and as an American *Door* open to European memories.

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Die Mediatisierung des "kollektiven Unbewußten" als Kollektivsymbol und Archetypus

DOROTHEA SCHOLL

Wir wissen von uns selbst
nur die Hälfte — wer kennt den Rest – – –?

Stanislaw Wyspianski, *Die Hochzeit* (III,2)

Die Identität eines Volkes oder einer kulturellen Gemeinschaft konstituiert sich über die gemeinsame Erinnerung, die in der Literatur dieser Gemeinschaft oder in anderen Orten des Gedächtnisses wie Museum, Denkmal oder Nationalfeiertag repräsentiert und tradiert wird (vgl. Raimondi1998: IX). Das Gedächtnis ist wählerisch: es selektiert das, was als bewahrenswert und überlebensnotwenig erscheint, um anderes zu vergessen oder zu verdrängen. Oder aber es fokussiert Urerlebnisse und Traumata als das Wesentliche und Determinierende, hinter dem anderes zur Nebensache wird und in dessen Licht spätere Ereignisse gedeutet werden. In den anthropologischen Strukturen des Imaginären können sich die Metaphern und Symbole einer Gemeinschaft zu einem Mythos verdichten, in dem Geschichte und Gegenwart zu einer Einheit verschmelzen. Dieser Mythos hat eine identitätsbildende und -stabilisierende Funktion. Er bildet die Meta-Erzählung der kollektiven Identität dieser Gemeinschaft.

Der Rekurs auf das Konzept des "kollektiven Unbewußten" spielt hierbei eine wesentliche Rolle, wobei jedoch in den Texten und Medien, die sich darauf beziehen, nicht näher erläutert wird, in welchem Sinne dieses schwierig faßbare Konzept jeweils gemeint ist. Es ist daher jedesmal von Fall zu Fall neu zu bestimmen. Eine systematische

Untersuchung der verschiedenen diachronen und synchronen Varianten in der Konzeption des "kollektiven Unbewußten" kann in diesem Rahmen natürlich nicht geleistet werden, würde aber interessante Ergebnisse zutage bringen, zumal sich die Grenzen des "Kollektiven" verschieben und die Zeichen einer oder mehrerer Gruppenzugehörigkeiten je nach ideologischem Standort in die mediale Konstruktion des "kollektiven Unbewußten" entweder einbezogen oder ausgeschlossen werden. Je mehr das "kollektive Unbewußte" durch ein wie auch immer medial inszeniertes "kollektives Gedächtnis" manipuliert wird, um so mehr verliert es den Bezug zum realen Ereignis, und um so stärker verwischen die Grenzen zwischen individuellem und kollektiven Bewußtsein. Dies gilt insbesondere für die "globale Gesellschaft", in der das "kollektive Unbewußte" zunehmend von medial manipulierten Symbolen beherrscht wird. Die Mediatisierung kann zu einer Nivellierung, Uniformierung und Standardisierung führen, woduch das *proprium* der betreffenden kulturellen Gemeinschaft verloren geht. Auch die allgemeingültige Aussagekraft dieser Gemeinschaft verliert dann ihre Ausstrahlung, wie Jean-Yves Masson sehr treffend bemerkt hat: "Une culture accède à une dimension mondiale quand elle met au jour en elle-même, par son propre approfondissement, de quoi intéresser le monde entier, non quand elle cède à la pression extérieure et au goût dominant qui lui imposent des modèles et des langages standardisés." (Masson 2001: 38). Bevor die Problematik der Mediatisierung nun anhand von Beispielen mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der frankokanadischen Literatur verdeutlicht werden soll, soll der Begriff des "kollektiven Unbewußten" zunächst näher erläutert werden.

Das Konzept des "kollektiven Unbewußten"

Das Konzept des "kollektiven Unbewußten" stammt aus der Psychoanalyse. Es wurde von Carl Gustav Jung in Abgrenzung zu Sigmund Freud entwickelt. In Polemik mit Freuds Deutung kultureller Phänomene als kompensatorischer Ausdruck sublimierter Impulse des Unbewußten[1] führte Jung die Unterscheidung zwischen einem

[1] "Leider hat die zwar begreifliche Überschätzung der Sexualität FREUD dazu geführt, auch die Umformungen, welche andern spezifischen, der

persönlichen und einem kollektiven Unbewußten ein. Das persönliche Unbewußte äußert sich in Träumen; das kollektive Unbewußte in den Mythen, Märchen und Utopien der gesamten Menschheit.

Wenn es auch zunächst den Anschein hat, daß eine solch "globalisierende" Sichtweise neben der Gefahr der Verallgemeinerung die Differenzen in der Mythenbildung verschiedener Kulturen verwischt und die ideologischen Bedingungen, die zur Mythenbildung führen, unberücksichtigt läßt — wie etwa die Tatsache, daß Mythen häufig eine systemstabilisierende Funktion haben und bestehende Machtverhältnisse begründen oder zementieren —, so birgt sie doch auch die Möglichkeit, in den verschiedenen "Metaerzählungen" der Menschheit anthropologische Konstanten zu erkennen und jenseits der Differenzen das Gemeinsame und Verbindende zu entdecken.

Dieses Gemeinsame und Verbindende nennt Jung "Archetypen des kollektiven Unbewußten". Die "Archetypen des kollektiven Unbewußten" faßt er dabei unabhängig von Zeit und Raum als symbolische Urbilder auf, die über Träume und Mythen zur Anschauung kommen.[2] So ist etwa der Drache in den verschiedenen Mythen eine archetypische Projektion; der Kampf mit dem Ungeheuer veräußerlicht den Konflikt des Menschen mit dem Übermächtigen oder Unmenschlichen (vgl. Bialostocki 1966: 117–118). Das heißt, in der symbolischen Bildsprache der Träume und Mythen tritt etwas Verdrängtes verschleiert zutage. Es wird nach Außen projiziert. In analogen Symbolen und Strukturen der individuellen Träume und jenen der Mythen erkannte Jung Korrelationen. Ihm zufolge gibt es einen Zusammenhang zwischen dem persönlichen Individuationsprozeß und

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Sexualität koordinierten Kräften der Seele entsprechen, auf die Sexualität zu reduzieren, was ihm den nicht unberechtigten Vorwurf des Pansexualismus eingetragen hat. Der Mangel der FREUDschen Anschauung besteht in der Einseitigkeit, zu der die mechanistisch-kausale Betrachtungsweise immer neigt, nämlich in der simplifizierenden reductio ad causam, welche, je wahrer, je einfacher und je umfassender sie ist, umso weniger der Bedeutung des analysierten und reduzierten Gebildes gerecht wird." (Jung 1985: 28–29)

[2] Bereits bei Freud findet sich im Anschluß an Nietzsche der Gedanke, daß Träume das Archaische im Menschen vermitteln: "Wir ahnen, wie treffend die Worte Fr. Nietzsches sind, daß sich im Traume ›ein uraltes Stück Menschentum fortübt, zu dem man auf direktem Wege kaum mehr gelangen kann‹, und werden zur Erwartung veranlaßt, durch die Analyse der Träume zur Kenntnis der archaischen Erbschaft des Menschen zu kommen, das seelisch Angeborene in ihm zu erkennen." (Freud 1972: 524)

dem kollektiven Unbewußten, dessen Ausdruck die "Archetypen" sind.

> [In den Träumen des Individuationsprozesses] sind [...] sogenannte *mythologische Motive* bzw. *Mythologeme* enthalten, die ich als *Archetypen* bezeichnet habe. Darunter sind spezifische Formen und bildmäßige Zusammenhänge zu verstehen, die sich in übereinstimmender Form nicht nur in allen Zeiten und Zonen, sondern auch in individuellen Träumen, Phantasien, Visionen und Wahnideen finden. Ihr häufiges Vorkommen in individuellen Fällen sowie ihre ethnische Ubiquität beweisen, daß die menschliche Seele nur zu einem Teil einmalig und subjektiv oder persönlich ist, zum andern aber *kollektiv* und *objektiv*. (Jung 1985: 156–157)

Jung sah im menschlichen Instinkt den Ursprung der Archetypen. Die Instinkte sind "unter rationalen Motivierungen verhüllt" und transformieren "die Archetypen in rationale Begriffe [...]. Unter dieser Hülle ist der Archetypus kaum mehr zu erkennen. Und doch ist die Art und Weise, wie sich der Mensch innerlich die Welt abbildet, trotz aller Verschiedenheit in der Einzelheit ebenso gleichmäßig und regelmäßig, wie sein instinktives Handeln." (Ib. 172) Das "Rationale" ist so gesehen an sich schon die umgewandelte Form von Instinktivem. Das heißt: Nach Jung sind Mythos *und* Logos (im Sinne der analytischen Ratio) Projektionen des kollektiven Unbewußten, wobei der Mythos aufklärerisch und der Logos mythisierend wirken kann.[3] Beide, Mythos und Logos, faßt Jung als kulturelle Umformung und Umwandlung von Instinkten auf. Die Archteypen sind ambivalent: sie sind Bestandteile des kollektiven Unbewußten und führen uns zum Gemeinsamen, aber dieses Gemeinsame ist *a priori* nicht "unschuldig".

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[3] Ursprünglich wurden Mythos und Logos als Einheit aufgefaßt, erst später kam es zur Opposition, die schon im Doppelsinn des antiken Orakels "archetypisch fixiert" ist (vgl. Huber 1979: 4). Adorno, Horkheimer und Blumenberg sahen im Mythos "eine Form der Aufklärung; denn die mythische Weltdeutung diene der Orientierung des Menschenwesens in einer überall ihn mit Tod bedrohenden Umwelt [...]." (Frank 1989: 95–96)

> Archetypen sind typische Formen des Auffassens, und überall, wo es sich um gleichmäßige und regelmäßig wiederkehrende Auffassungen handelt, handelt es sich um einen Archetypus, gleichviel ob dessen mythologischer Charakter erkannt wird oder nicht. Das kollektive Unbewußte besteht aus der Summe der Instinkte und ihrer Korrelate, der Archetypen. So wie jeder Mensch Instinkt besitzt, so besitzt er auch die Urbilder. (Ib. 173)

Jung geht es letztlich um Erkenntnisprozesse, die die Selbstwerdung des Individuums ermöglichen. Das Universelle vermittelt sich über Archetypen. Die Archetypen beziehen sich auf die gemeinsame Welterfahrung. Sie sind ein transkulturelles Phänomen, dessen Untersuchung interdisziplinären Austausch erfordert.

Northrop Frye hat Jungs Archetypentheorie für die Literaturwissenschaft fruchtbar gemacht, indem er häufig wiederkehrende Symbole, Motive und Bildvorstellungen in der Literatur als Archetypen kennzeichnete: "A symbol, usually an image, which recurs often enough in literature to be recognizable as an element of one's literary experience as a whole" (Frye 1957: 365). Frye zählt dazu die literarische Darstellung von Paradies- und Höllenvorstellungen, apokalyptische Symbolik, die Motive der Unschuld, des Drachenkampfs, des Kampfs mit Riesen, das Labyrinth, Sintfluterzählungen, die narrative Struktur von Kindheitslegenden, das Paar Venus und Adonis, die Maske und andere transkulturelle Motive. Auch literarische Gattungen — Epos, Tragödie, Komödie — werden von Frye als Archetypen bezeichnet sowie deren parodistische Umkehrungen mittels Satire oder Ironie, was ebenfalls auch für die seriöse Behandlung literarischer Motive gilt. Frye tendiert dazu, das Begehren (*desire*) und dessen Gegenteil als Ursachen der Bildung archetypischer Muster in der Literatur anzunehmen (Frye 1957: 141–158).

Die Symbolik von literarischen Figuren wie Hamlet, Faust, Don Juan oder Don Quijote ist leicht vermittelbar und läßt sich deshalb ohne weiteres in andere kulturelle Kontexte übertragen und kann in diesen anderen Kontexten hohe Aussagekraft entwickeln. Diese Figuren berühren allgemein menschliche Probleme und sind, weil sie ein Allgemeines in der Brechung eines individuellen Bewußtseins vermitteln, ansprechend. Sie haben eine archetypische Dimension mit hoher Symbolhaltigkeit erreicht. Anders verhält es sich mit Kollektivsymbolen.

Archetypen und Kollektivsymbolik

Betrachtet man nun die Kollektivsymbolik einzelner Nationen oder Gruppen im Vergleich, so lassen sich auf den ersten Blick neben den anthropologisch bedingten Invarianten der Archetypen im Sinne Jungs und Fryes auch Symbole erkennen, die nur in dieser Gruppe und nur von dieser verstanden werden können. Aus diesem Grund scheint mir eine Unterscheidung zwischen "universellen Archetypen", die sich auf die Allgemeinheit beziehen, und "kollektiven Symbolen", bei denen es vorrangig um eine "interne" Verständigung geht, angebracht. In den kollektiven Symbolen vermittelt sich das, was von der Soziologie unter dem Begriff "kollektives Gedächtnis" (Halbwachs) oder von der Kulturwissenschaft unter dem Begriff "kulturelles Gedächtnis" (Assmann) gefaßt worden ist. In Gesellschaften, die von außen — sei es durch Fremdherrschaft, sei es durch Diktatur — unterdrückt und in ihrer Substanz gefährdet werden, scheint die Vergewisserung der eigenen Existenz und Differenz mithilfe einer internen Kollektivsymbolik eine größere Rolle zu spielen als in Gesellschaften, deren Existenz von niemandem bedroht oder in Frage gestellt wird. Auch in Geheimgesellschaften hat die interne Symbolik eine verbindende Funktion. Die Kollektivsymbolik ist kommunikativ auf eine Gemeinschaft bezogen und wirkt auf die Identität dieser Gemeinschaft ein. Sie setzt nicht immer eine "geschlossene Gesellschaft" voraus sondern kann auch das Ziel verfolgen, eine solche zu verwirklichen. Der polnische Filmregisseur Andrzej Wajda hat die aus der nationalen Kollektivsymbolik resultierende Problematik der kommunikativen Verständigung in einem Interview auf den Punkt gebracht:

> Unsere nationale Symbolik ist in einer sehr abgeschlossenen und begrenzten Welt entstanden. Die Krakauer und die freie Stadt Krakau, die während ihrer hundertjährigen Besetzung unabhängige polnische Kunst produzierte, schufen auch die Symbole: Stanczyk in *Die Hochzeit* — und der schwarze Ritter, Chochol. Das alles sind Symbole, die anderswo vollkommen unverständlich sind. Mir wäre es lieber, in unserem Nationaldrama *Die Hochzeit* würde der Geist von Hamlet auftreten, dann würden doch alle die, die den *Hamlet* kennen, — und *Hamlet* gehört wohl zur Allgemeinbildung —, wenigstens wissen, worum es

> geht. Die Benutzung der Symbole ist also eine Notwendigkeit, wenn man sich mit der eigenen Gesellschaft verständigen will, und eine Gefahr, wenn man einer anderen Gesellschaft etwas mitzuteilen hat. Deshalb habe ich früher, in meinen frühen Filmen, mehr von diesen Symbolen verwendet. Heute bin ich viel vorsichtiger. (Wajda 1993)

Da das Medium Film ebenso wie die Theateraufführung einen unmittelbaren Rezeptionsvorgang voraussetzt, kann es nicht, wie das Buch, dem unkundigen Rezipienten die Kollektivsymbolik einer Nation oder einer kulturellen Gemeinschaft in einem kritischen Apparat oder Kommentar aufschlüsseln. Es muß andere Mittel und Wege finden, um die Schwierigkeit der Kommunikation einer internen Symbolsprache zu überwinden. Wajda ist es mit seiner meisterhaften Verfilmung von Stanislaw Wyspianskis Drama *Die Hochzeit* dennoch gelungen, die interne Symbolsprache des Dramas auch für Außenstehende faszinierend zu vermitteln, indem er intermediale Bezüge herstellte und auf diese Weise das Symbol dem Archetypischen annäherte, ohne das Spezifische aufzugeben. Er inspirierte sich an der traditionellen polnischen Musik und Kunst und "verlebendigte" in einzelnen Filmszenen und -sequenzen wie auch in der Gesamtatmosphäre verschiedene Gemälde von polnischen Künstlern, Piotr Michalowski, Jacek Malczewski, Jan Matejko und natürlich vor allem Wyspianski selbst. Durch dieses Verfahren transponierte er Bildeindrücke und Bildvorstellungen der Vergangenheit in ein anderes Medium. Sein Film ist eine aktualisierende Vergegenwärtigung der Vergangenheit unter den Rezeptionsbedingungen der Gegenwart. Das Gelebte der Vergangenheit wird im Rückgriff auf das Imaginäre der Künstler neu vermittelt, neu gelebt und neu vererbt. Die Künstler, an denen sich Wajda inspirierte, sind alle tief in der europäischen Tradition verwurzelt und haben es ihrerseits ebenfalls verstanden, das Eigene mit dem Anderen zu verbinden.

Wenn sich die nationalen Kollektivsymbole den Archetypen annähern, enthalten und entfalten sie interkulturelle kommunikative Möglichkeiten. Das ist natürlich auch schon der Fall in Wyspianskis Drama. Dort spielen die Symbole bereits auf außersprachlicher Ebene eine wesentliche Rolle: "[...] über dem Fenster ein Erntekranz aus Ähren; — draußen Dunkel, Finsternis — hinter dem Fenster der Obstgarten und im regnerischen Unwetter ein zum Schutz vor der

Kälte in Stroh gehüllter Strauch." (Wyspianski 1992: 11) Dieser mit Stroh geschützte Rosenstrauch, Chochol, ist auf der Ebene der internen Kommunikation ein nationales Kollektivsymbol.

> "[...] wer nach Rosen duftet,
> dem tut die schlimmste Kälte nichts an;
> er wird mit Stroh zugetan
> und im Frühling wieder enthüllt
> zur neuen Blüte." (Wyspianski 1992: 85)

Gleichzeitig kann man dieses Symbol in seiner Verdichtung von Widersprüchlichem auf der Ebene der externen Kommunikation aber auch archetypisch als silenisches Bild verstehen: Hinter der grotesken Außenhülle verbirgt sich ein sublimes Wesen. Die Polysemie dieses Symbols weist darüber hinaus auf die im Drama thematisierte Verbindung zwischen Bauern und Adel, Natur und Kultur, Schlichtem und Raffiniertem sowie auf elementare Ängste vor Zerstörung. Chochol birgt und enthüllt das kollektive Unbewußte der Polen und schlägt gleichzeitig die Brücke zwischen nationaler und supranationaler Thematik. Wyspianski inszenierte in seinem Drama bestimmte polnische Gedächtsnisorte als Symbole, indem er in Visionen seiner Protagonisten legendäre Figuren aus der polnischen Vergangenheit auftreten ließ, die alle das, was im kollektiven Unbewußten "die Seele beschwert" und man "in Träumen erfährt" (Wyspianski 1992: 95), vergegenwärtigen und verlebendigen und in ihrer archetypischen Dimension darüber hinausgehend universal sind: der Hofnarr Stanczyk, der dem Archetypus des weisen Narren entspricht, der schwarze Ritter, der den vergangenen Ruhm Polens repräsentiert und in der Überlieferung als nationaler Held galt, gleichzeitig in seiner archetypischen Dimension die Macht darstellt, Hetman, der das Land "dem Teufel verkauft" und unter Fremdherrschaft gebracht hat und dem Archetypus des Verräters entspricht; der Prophet Wernyhora und andere. All die Geister der Vergangenheit erschließen — auch für Außenstehende — in ihrer symbolischen Verdichtung und künstlerischen Vergegenwärtigung ein Verständnis für den "Nationalcharakter" und auch für nationale Traumata. In anderer Weise, als es die Geschichtsschreibung fähig wäre, vermitteln sie einen tiefen Einblick in die "Volksseele", um einen Begriff der Romantik zu gebrauchen. Wyspianski und Wajda ist es gelungen, mittels ihrer Kunst die Symbole des kollektiven Unbewußten an die Oberfläche zu bringen und der Reflexionsebene zugänglich zu machen.

Bei beiden geht es sowohl um die eigene Verständigung mit der nationalen Tradition als auch um deren Vermittlung nach innen und außen.

Kollektive Vereinnahmung des Individuellen

Ein anderer Zugang zum "kollektiven Unbewußten" findet sich in der frankokanadischen Literatur. Auch hier ist das Konzept schwer faßbar und variiert nach der jeweiligen Bestimmung der "Grenzen" des Kollektiven. So können die Zeichen der "Américanité" oder der "Indianité" je nach ideologischem Standort der Autoren entweder in die Vorstellung und Darstellung einer "Québécité" Eingang finden oder ausgeschlossen werden. Der Dichter Gaston Miron bezog sich auf das Konzept in folgender Weise: Um das Unbewußte seines Volkes zu erreichen, habe er manche seiner poetischen Texte nach der Rhetorik politischer Propagandatexte, andere nach den Rhythmen traditioneller Volksmusik und wieder andere nach den Rhythmen von Flüchen, wie man sie in Kneipen hört, gestaltet: "Ça atteint l'inconscient." (Miron 1995) Hinzu kommt die Aussage Mirons, seine Texte würden amerikanischen Rhythmen folgen.[4]

Tatsächlich wird durch ein solches Verfahren eine suggestive Wirkung erreicht, die Tiefenschichten im Rezipienten berührt und nur diesen — durch die gemeinsame Kultur geprägten Rezipienten — erreichen kann. Jene, die außerhalb dieser gemeinsamen Kultur stehen, werden diese Texte anders rezipieren. Dennoch: "Quand on descend profondément en soi, on rejoint les autres", sagte Miron (Miron 1995), der über die Grenzen der Kollektivsymbolik hinausgehend immer wieder betonte, er habe die poetischen Texte anderer Dichter — Du Bellay, Apollinaire, Alfred Desrochers u.a. — so tief verinnerlicht, daß er sich von ihren Rhythmen nicht befreien konnte oder wollte: "je n'avais pas d'autres mots, d'autres écritures que les vôtres", schreibt er in *L'Homme rapaillé* (Miron 1981: 157). Bereits in der Sprache sind die Ausdrucksformen anderer assimiliert. Miron war sich dessen bewußt.

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[4] Vgl. hierzu das Vorwort zu Mirons *L'Homme rapaillé* von Pierre Nepveu: "*On a beaucoup parlé de la québécité de Miron, mais moins de son américanité. Lui-même, en 1985, après l'obtention du prix Molson, définissait pourtant ainsi son livre: ›Une écriture expansionniste à images et rythmes américains. Une écriture à la Jackson Pollock, de l'action-écriture‹.*" (Miron 1981:13)

Die Ironie der Geschichte will nun daß, obwohl sich Miron im Goetheschen Sinne einer Weltliteratur aussprach — "La littérature ... existera collectivement" (Miron 1981: 201) —, und obwohl er seine subjektive monologische Stimme als eine Stimme darstellte, die sich aus den vielen Stimmen anderer Dichter zusammensetzt, er in frankokanadischen Literaturgeschichten als Repräsentant einer spezifischen "identité québécoise" vereinnahmt wird, die sich in aggressiver Abgrenzung zum Fremden behauptet. Das Konzept des "kollektiven Unbewußten" wird in diesem Fall als Bestandteil einer gemeinsamen Metaerzählung ideologisch zu einer Fiktion des Homogenen funktionalisiert: Es suggeriert Gemeinsamkeit und Geschlossenheit. Es löscht die Stimmen derer, die anders denken und fühlen. Jacques Godbout schrieb 1971 in der Zeitschrift *Liberté*, daß es in Québec nur einen einzigen Schriftsteller und nur einen einzigen Text gibt: "Il n'y a au Québec qu'un seul écrivain: nous tous. La littérature québécoise est un texte unique." (Godbout 1971) Eine solche Homogenisierung ist ein auffallendes Kennzeichen der frankokanadischen Literatur und Literaturkritik. Das Individuelle und Subjektive wird in vielen Texten entweder von vornherein als kollektiv präsentiert, oder aber es wird im Rezeptionsprozeß kollektiv *gedeutet*. Im ersten Fall wurde der Begriff "Sujet-Nation" aufgebracht (Michaud, Cardinal). Der Autor tritt als epischer Sprecher des Volkes auf. Im zweiten Fall werden er selbst oder seine Texte als symbolische Repräsentationen der kollektiven Identität interpretiert. Dies ist auch der Fall bei Hubert Aquin, über den die frankokanadische Presse folgendermaßen urteilte: "Hubert Aquin devient, par la vertu créatrice, le Canadien français transcendantal [...] Nous n'avons plus à chercher. Nous le tenons, notre grand écrivain. Mon Dieu, merci." (Blais 1965)

Aquin inszenierte in seinen Romanen zwar ein kollektives Ich, doch gleichzeitig bezweifelte er die Möglichkeit der Repräsentation einer nationalen Identität als solche. Seine Identitätskonstruktionen enden in der Affirmation der Unmöglichkeit einer anderen Repräsentation als jener der *Vanitas*: "[...] je suis une anamorphose de ma propre mort et de l'ennui." (Aquin 1968: 130). Diese Verweigerung einer nationalen Repräsentation zeigt sich in besonderer Weise an Aquins Deutung des berühmten Gemäldes *Die Botschafter* (1533) von Hans Holbein, auf dem die französischen Botschafter Jean de Dinteville und Georges de Selve dargestellt sind.

Auf den ersten Blick sieht man die beiden reich gekleideten Botschafter. Betrachtet man das Bild jedoch schräg von der Seite, erkennt man einen Totenschädel in der Mitte, der in anamorphotischer Verzerrung dargestellt ist. Aquin deutet dies im Roman folgendermaßen:

> [...] Ces "Ambassadeurs", costumés en trompe-l'âme, sont l'image même du néant: ces deux hommes, réunis autour d'une concentration folle de symboles mortuaires, ne sont pas des représentants d'un pays natal, mais de la vanité inhérente à toute puissance terrestre et de l'absurdité de toute représentation. (Aquin 1968: 132)

Die nationale Kollektivsymbolik tritt in Widerstreit mit dem universellen Archetypus des *memento mori*.

Traditionsbruch und Traditionsverlust

Aquins Polemik mit nationalen Identitätskonstruktionen geht mit seiner Ablehnung der eigenen kulturellen Tradition einher, an deren Stelle er die absolute Leere, die vollkommene Gedächtnislücke setzt (*Trou de mémoire*): "ce pays n'a rien dit, ni rien écrit, il n'a pas produit un conte de fée, ni d'épopée pour figurer par tous les artifices de l'invention, son fameux destin de conquis" (Aquin 1968: 55–56).

Diese Einschätzung entspricht natürlich nicht der Wirklichkeit. Die Zurückweisung der Tradition durch die Autoren der *Révolution tranquille* im Québec der 1960er und 70er Jahre erklärt sich durch den Wunsch nach einer Modernisierung der Literatur. Die Literatur der Vergangenheit wurde als retrograd und fremdbeherrscht empfunden. Die Vehemenz der globalen Zurückweisung einer eigenen Tradition zeigte sich bereits 1948 im Manifest *Refus global*. Dort wurde der Ausgang aus einer durch Minderwertigkeitsgefühle und Angst besetzten klerikalisierten und kolonialisierten Mentalität gefordert und gepriesen und mit den Mitteln des surrealistischen Automatismus eine Revolution im Bewußtsein und Unterbewußtsein heraufbeschworen (vgl. Borduas 1977). Bei vielen Autoren der *Révolution tranquille* artikulierte sich die Konstruktion einer "neuen" Identität in der vehementen Zurückweisung des "Fremden" wie auch in der Negierung der eigenen Tradition. Die globale Ablehnung und Verdrängung der Tradition ging schließlich sogar so weit, daß die Vergangenheit als unbeschriebenes Blatt erscheinen sollte und auch erschien, was natürlich ein ideologisches Konstrukt ist, um die Traditionen vergessen zu machen.[5]

Die Orte der Erinnerung sind ausgelöscht. Georges-André Vachon stellte angesichts dieser Situation die Frage, wie man ohne Vergangenheit und ohne Erinnerung sich selbst entwerfen kann und führte die Identitätsunsicherheit der Frankokanadier auf das Fehlen einer Tradition zurück, die zuerst einmal "erfunden" werden müsse ("une tradition à inventer"): "[...] nous saurions mieux qui nous sommes, si notre culture, comme celle de beaucoup de petites nations d'Europe et

[5] Nebenbei bemerkt wird damit ein alter Topos aufgegriffen, denn bereits im 19. Jahrhundert hatten Autoren wie Joseph Quesnel und Michel Bibaud die kulturelle "Leere" Frankokanadas beklagt, was dann in Lord Durhams berühmtem Diktum, die Frankokanadier seien ein Volk ohne Geschichte und ohne Literatur, kulminierte. Vgl. Scholl (im Druck).

d'Amérique latine, possédait l'assise solide, la profondeur d'une *tradition*." (Vachon 1969: 270) Und Lise Gauvin äußerte sich fünfzehn Jahre später in folgender Weise:

> [...] je cherche encore la tradition dans cette société dite traditionaliste. À tel point que je me demande si la devise *Je me souviens* n'est pas là pour rappeler que l'histoire existe à une collectivité fortement tentée par l'amnésie. [...] La seule tradition que je perçoive aujourd'hui au Québec est une tradition de rupture. (Gauvin 1984: 102–103)

Gerade weil die Vergangenheit die Rolle des "fremden Anderen" einnahm und "ausgelöscht" wurde, kam es mit der *Révolution tranquille* im literarischen Feld Québecs zu einem Zustand, den man mit Barthes als *degré zéro de l'écriture* (Barthes 1953) charakterisieren könnte, d.h. zum Versuch einer Neutralität ohne semiotische Vorbedingungen. Auf einer archetypischen Ebene zeichnet sich hinter diesem Versuch einer *creatio ex nihilo* das Bedürfnis nach dem goldenen Zeitalter ab, nach Reinheit und Unschuld, das wiederum dem von Baudrillard beschriebenen *degré zéro de la culture* (Baudrillard 1986: 78) entspricht, d.h. der utopischen Vorstellung, ohne irgendeine Voraussetzung etwas Neues und Besseres schaffen zu wollen und zu können. Tatsächlich ging es vielen Autoren im literarischen Feld Québecs der 1960er und 70er Jahre darum, sich eine neue Literatur mit einem neuen kollektiven Imaginären zu schaffen, und dies in mehr oder weniger polemischer Abgrenzung zu anderen Literaturen.

Mediatisierte Kollektivsymbolik

Um eine "nationale" und "populäre" Literatur mit einer eigenen Ausdrucksweise zu erreichen, suchte man — auch in Demarkation zu Frankreich — nach einer neuen Sprachnormierung und einer neuen Kollektivsymbolik. "Quand les dramaturges québécois auront trouvé une armature, une structure théâtrale qui nous soit propre, à l'égale de notre épine dorsale collective, nous aurons non seulement une dramaturgie authentique et nôtre, mais aussi un pays," schrieb Claude Levac im Vorwort zu *Le Chemin du Roy* (Loranger/Levac 1969: 16),

einem Improvisationsstück, in dem Charles De Gaulle als Symbol des kollektiven Unbewußten der frankophonen Quebecker propagiert und mediatisiert wird. "*C'était le symbole même de notre vie collective humiliée et soudain, hors de tout espoir, glorifiée.*" (Ib. 9) Die Autoren des Stückes, Françoise Loranger und Claude Levac, charakterisierten *Le Chemin du Roy* als "théâtre de participation [...] en accord avec l'inconscient collectif québécois" (Interview Loranger 1969, zit. in Godin/Mailhot 1988: 193). Mit diesem Happening wurde das Ziel verfolgt, den historischen Augenblick des Besuchs von De Gaulle 1967 in Québec wiederaufleben zu lassen und durch die Partizipation des Publikums zum kollektiven und quasi rituellen Erlebnis zu steigern. De Gaulle und sein Schrei "Vive le Québec libre!" werden zum Bestandteil und Ausdruck des kollektiven Unbewußten mediatisiert. Als weitere Zeichen des "inconscient collectif québécois" fungierten in diesem turbulenten Spektakel außerdem das Eishockeyspiel, Orgelklänge, Trompetenfanfaren, Popmusik, Werbeplakate, das Emblem der Lilienblüte, das Alternieren von englischen und französischen Repliken. In ähnlicher Weise appellierte auch Jean-Claude Germain an Symbole des "kollektiven Unbewußten". Mit seinen "populären" Spektakeln versuchte er, ein System aus Symbolen und Zeichen aufzubauen, um die kollektive Identität zu erreichen und zu beeinflussen. Durch die Inszenierung eines medial veräußerlichten "kollektiven Unbewußten" soll ein starkes Gefühl der Gemeinsamkeit und der Differenz zu anderen beim Publikum entstehen. Die Verwendung des "joual", wie man sie etwa im Theater Michel Tremblays findet, ist in diesem Sinne ebenfalls ein Bestandteil der neuen Kollektivsymbolik der Frankokanadier in Québec seit der *Révolution tranquille*. Hinter der medialen Modellierung des "kollektiven Unbewußten" zum Zwecke der Distinktion mit dem Ziel der kollektiven Identitätsstiftung können aber auch Archetypen in Erscheinung treten, die im Sinne Jungs instinktgebunden sind und Ausdruck von Xenophobie sein können. In der Ablehnung der Literaturen der "Anderen", die sich in Québec durch verschiedene literarische Verfahren wie z.B. Parodie oder kulturell assimilierende Übersetzung bekundet (vgl. Brisset 1990), tritt die Tatsache zutage, daß Literatur nicht *ex nihilo* entstehen geschweige denn kommunikativ wirken kann.

Korrelationen

Literatur bewegt sich immer in einem semiotischen Kontext, und gerade die vergleichende Betrachtung der Korrelationen von traditionsverweigernden Literaturen mit eben jener Tradition, die sie vorgeben, abzulehnen oder zu ignorieren, führt zur Erkenntnis von archetypischen Mustern, die die Kohärenz von "Nationalliteraturen" bilden und gleichzeitig über sie hinaus auf analoge Muster im Kontext der "Weltliteratur" weisen. In der Art und Weise, wie die Tradition abgelehnt und attackiert wird, können Mechanismen in Erscheinung treten, die jene der früheren Diskurse mit umgekehrten Vorzeichen reproduzieren, ohne sich dessen bewußt zu sein. Sie sind in ihrer Heftigkeit und in ihrem Absolutheitsanspruch nicht weniger dogmatisch. In der Literatur kann Kontinuität durch Diskontinuität tradiert werden (vgl. Raimondi 1998: XVI). Im Zitat, im Fragment, in der parodistischen Karnevalisierung oder in der assimilatorischen Transformation der Tradition können archetypische Muster der Vergangenheit weiterbestehen. Die alten Mythen sind in vielen zeitgenössischen Texten präsent, und dies nicht immer in polemischer oder parodistischer Form, sondern sie werden weitertransportiert und reaktualisiert. Hinter der Entmythisierung kann sich eine Remythisierung verbergen. Der *mythe du terroir* kann die Tiefenschicht eines modernen oder postmodernen Textes weiterhin determinieren. So könnte beispielsweise Jacques Poulins Roman *Volkswagen Blues* (1984) als eine Neuauflage des alten *mythe du terroir* gelesen werden: Der Protagonist befindet sich in einer Identitätskrise und sucht nach seiner "appartenance", die durch seinen Bruder verkörpert wird. Die verschiedenen Stationen, die er auf seiner Spurensuche durchläuft, werden mit einem Kreuzweg assimiliert, an dessen Ende die Katastrophe steht. Der Erzähler verbindet sich nicht mit seiner Begleiterin und Assistentin, einer Mulattin, er verbringt nur eine Wegstrecke mit ihr, und die Suche nach seinem Bruder, der das Land verlassen mußte, endet in der Katastrophe. Der als "non-identified man" bezeichnete Bruder namens "Théo" verkörpert nach dieser Lesart die messianistische Ideologie des 19. Jahrhunderts und ist eine Art neuer Typus des alten Waldläufers, der entheroisiert wird und sich als "Judas", als Verräter an der frankokanadischen Sache erweist. Wie im traditionellen *roman du terroir* wird er für sein "Waldläufertum" bestraft: er landet in der Fremde als menschliche Ruine, die — an den

Rollstuhl gefesselt — zu keiner Handlung mehr fähig ist, nicht mehr sprechen kann, sich an nichts mehr erinnert und ihre Identität endgültig verloren hat. Zeichnet sich hier nicht der alte *mythe du terroir* ab und die Idee, daß man für das Verlassen des Landes mit Identitätsverlust bezahlt? Wie in der *terroir*-Literatur wird die Flucht aus dem Land im Sinne einer poetischen Gerechtigkeit bestraft. So kann man sich fragen: Ist die Macht der Tradition nicht stärker, als es manchen Autoren bewußt ist?

Planetarische Öffnung

Eine neue Annäherungsweise an das "kollektive Unbewußte" findet sich in der suggestiven Aufführungspraxis der Autorin und Schauspielerin Pol Pelletier. Pelletier ist bestrebt, durch die Rückkehr zu den "archaischen" Quellen des "kollektiven Unbewußten" die Grenzen zwischen sich und dem Publikum aufzulösen. Das Individuum soll durchlässig werden für die Gruppe.

> C'est l'eau qui nous relie. [...] Selon mon ami chamane, l'eau constitue l'archétype de la communication dans l'inconscient ethnique québécois. [...] En ce moment, nous baignons toutes et tous dans la même eau, dans l'eau de l'inconscient collectif. [...] En ce moment, nous nous visitons les uns et les autres, nous nous infiltrons les uns dans les autres par la voie des canaux de l'eau de l'inconscient collectif, qui court partout en nous et, autour de nous, exactement comme le grand corps de la terre du Québec qui est pénétré et sillonné de toutes parts des nappes d'eau de toutes les tailles. [...] Qu'est-ce qu'il dit notre inconscient personnel, ethnique et collectifsur notre lien avec l'eau? (Pelletier 1999)

Pelletier spielt assoziativ mit den verschiedenen abstrakten und konkreten Bedeutungen des Wassers, das als ein Archetypus der Kommunikation vermittelt wird, der nicht nur die Frankoquebecker zur ethnischen Gemeinschaft verbindet, sondern auch zu den autochthonen Ursprüngen und zur Verbindung mit anderen Völkern führen soll — im Bewußtsein der Notwendigkeit, die Natur zu schützen.

Auch im Theater Jean-Pierre Ronfards läßt sich eine Tendenz zur Ausweitung des kollektiven Unbewußten erkennen. Ronfard gestaltete

mit seinem Dramenzyklus *Vie et mort du Roi Boiteux* eine *comédie humaine*, in der universelle Archetypen aus dem Theater der Welt zu einem Welttheater synthetisiert sind. Er bedient sich hierbei auch medial inszenierter Ikonen, die aber in diesem Fall weniger als Reflex einer medial beherrschten globalen Gesellschaft verstanden werden können, sondern als Gegendiskurs. So kann Literatur entweder zum Spiegel und zur Reproduktionsstätte einer mediatisierten Gesellschaft werden und sich in diesem Sinne vermarkten, oder aber sie kann als Ort des Authentischen, der künstlerischen Stilisierung, der Vermittlung von Reflexion und Emotion und der lebendigen Körperlichkeit ein Gegengewicht zum mediatisierten Simulacrum bilden.

In jüngster Zeit scheint sich in der Mediatisierung des kollektiven Unbewußten eine interkulturelle Öffnung abzuzeichnen. Der Diskurs des Anderen wird in den eigenen im Sinne einer Polyphonie integriert. Dennoch existiert auch weiterhin die Vorstellung einer absoluten Differenz. Das Vergessen der Traditionen und damit auch das Vergessen der kulturellen Identitäten wird zum globalen Problem. Doch die Kenntnis der literarischen und kulturellen Traditionen der Vergangenheit ist eine Voraussetzung für das Verständnis der Gegenwart. Jede Schriftstellerin und jeder Schriftsteller findet durch andere zum eigenen. "[...] on ne peut concevoir une culture qui n'aurait aucune relation avec les autres: l'identité naît de la (prise de conscience de la) différence; de plus, une culture n'évolue que par ses contacts: l'interculturel est constitutif du culturel." (Todorov 1991: 148–149). Literatur als Kunst, auch als Kunst der Durcharbeitung und Verschriftlichung des Mündlichen und der Erinnerung bewahrt die Tradition in mehr oder weniger kohärenter und in mehr oder weniger kontinuierlicher Form. Durch den intertextuellen und interkulturellen Kontext ist aber auch eine Öffnung auf andere Literaturen und die Gedächtnisorte anderer Kulturen und anderer Selbstdarstellungen gegeben.

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Tammsaare and Love

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The Icon of Love versus the Paradox of Desire

The idea of oneness, of an absolute unity, wholeness, and consistency haunts western civilization in many forms, in its sciences and humanities as well as in the social and political field. It is also the fundamental fantasy of love: "they shall be one flesh" (Genesis 2: 23) or as Charlotte Brontë's Jane Eyre, paraphrasing Adam in *Genesis*, says: "I am my husband's life as fully as he is mine. No woman was ever nearer to her mate then I am; ever more absolutely bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh" (Bronte 1971: 396–7). The icon of love is oneness.

Psychoanalytic discoveries, however, run counter to this myth. Lacan questions whether "love is about making one (*faire un*)" or that "Eros [is] a tension toward One" (Lacan 1998: 5). Logically, two cannot become one. If only I am, you are not or if you are, I am not. If there is only one, then there can also be no desire. To attain oneness, love is likely to end in either suicide or murder. The masochistic ego is endangered by love because he or she might surrender to the other as their object, even to the point of suicide. The sadistic ego on the other hand will make instrumental use of the other or destroy them. The narcissistic ego, seeking to avoid the self-loss entailed in love, had best never succumb to love at all. How then did this icon of love celebrated for centuries in romantic literature and painting come to be? What is its origin? Why are human beings in love with unified images, forms, wholes, and icons as such?

For Lacan, images, born in the order of the imaginary, are a defense against fragmentation, disintegration, and incoherence. Images have a solidity and fixity that defy the anxiety of dissolution.

Language confirms this imaginary stability, spatial stasis, and atemporality, but it also breaks up the fixedness of images with its restless metonymic motion from signifier to signifier. Language makes a radical break between the image of the object and the object itself. It separates us from the very world it gives us. It initiates us into desire. Desire is the structural effect of our assumption of language. Thus if love is a metaphor, desire is a metonymy. If love is iconophilic, desire is iconoclastic.

Language introduces desire with its iconoclastic discontent and anxiety because desire signifies the permanent frustration of never having what one wants and the knowledge that there is always more. There is always a beyond. Desire is a motion, an infinite movement; it is flight to ever-new desires. It is never at rest. Satisfaction ends desire. There is only desire if there is something other that is distant, absent, separated from or beyond the self. Desire hinges on the unobtainable and inaccessible, on something not present, on something lacking. Impossibility is a structural component of desire.

The icon of love as unity and completeness negates the idea of lack or loss. Inherently, therefore, it negates desire as well. Love, in so far as it is allied with stasis and iconophilically dedicated to the ideal of oneness, has reason to fear desire. The dialectic of desire forces a confrontation between fictional images and the reality of fragmentation and plurality that the images repress. It contradicts imaginary ideals and goals. Given then a fundamental oppositionality and contradiction between love and desire, how do humans who are called upon to handle both love and desire do so without simply opting for the truth or the existence of one or the other, dismissing one in favor of the other so that they do not have to live with an impossible complexity?

In the last two volumes of his great work, *Truth and Justice* ('Tõde ja Õigus'), Anton Hansen Tammsaare applies his great themes to the issues of desire, love, and jouissance. The distinctions Tammsaare discovers are consonant with the late Lacan's move away from a Freudian focus on sexuality and desire to an exploration as well of jouissance and love. For Lacan, it is necessary to find a way to speak about love despite the fact that it is inexpressible, because love never stops manifesting itself. It is fundamentally inexpressible not only because language is limited, but also because "the signifier is stupid," as Lacan finally permits himself to say (Lacan 1998: 20). Tamm-

saare's great epic would seem above all to agree with Lacan's judgment of the signifier as radically inadequate both to human interpersonal as well as ethical and legal requirements, though powerful and capable of precipitating a terrifying destructiveness and ravage in human relationships. It is a dangerous, highly verbal and argumentative love relationship that leads Indrek to an attempted murder of his wife, Karin, or to what Lacan calls the *passage à l'acte*. Tiina, Karin's counterpart, rescues the idea of love as well as explicating Tammsaare's version of what Lacan called the other or feminine jouissance. Though she is not constructed as an ideal, she is his attempt to represent a new way of loving and of living.

Tammsaare brings his characters to the limits of desire and of all they have known and believed. He questions the nature and function of the human desire and drive for a beyond, a more (*encore*), an excess. He asks about the pressure of the dimension of the inexplicable, unbearable, and impossible (that Lacan called the real) on humans in reality, and studies how different individuals handle this pressure, and with what counter-notions of possibility and certainty. He is Estonia's greatest realist precisely because his realism opens into the dimension of the real. The real is not the unreal, or the surreal, or the transcendental as traditionally defined. The real is a sudden break with reality and an unforeseen traumatic absence of all words and images. It is the other side of language where all sense, knowledge, significance, and orientation are missing. It is, the loss of the imaginary and symbolic subjectivity that gives the world its meaningfulness and subjects their illusory sense of control. As a plunge into a radical lack, a hole, it was anticipated by the imageless and voiceless abyss that Shelley's Demogorgon describes in *Prometheus Unbound*:

> — If the Abysm
> Could vomit forth its secrets: but a voice
> I wanting, the deep truth is imageless. (Shelley: II. iv. 114–16)

Though it is impossible to express, the real exists. As Wittgenstein said: "There is indeed the inexpressible. This shows itself (*dies zeigt sich*)" (Wittgenstein 1971: 187). For Lacan, encounters with the real "show" themselves as different forms of jouissance and anxiety, as inexpressible experiences of terror or bliss the site of which is the body.

Karin: Beyond Desire to Phallic and Lethal Jouissance

Katrin wants to recapture with Indrek (or with her lovers in adultery) the admiration that he initially gave her and that led (so she wrongly believes) to his desire to possess her. She says she wants to be loved, but what Katrin really wants is to be desired and possessed. Even after their marital catastrophe, she insists: "we [women] have it best then when we feel that the man keeps us as his very own thing [object]" (Tammsaare 1969: 414).

As the object of desire, she wants to enslave and control her partner. The other has to be her mirror and to give her an image of herself that she cannot herself get at or see: an ideal image of herself as desirable and irresistible that she can make instrumental use of to have power over the other. Her style of loving is what Lacan calls imaginary love, a love that is in its essence narcissistic and that readily evokes the potential power struggle and aggressivity pending in all imaginary relationships. Karin demands to be absolutely "honored" and "recognized" in a way that is reminiscent of the Hegelian master who demands recognition from the other even if it signifies the loss of his own life. She demands adulation, particularly, for her bodily ego as the source of the desire of her partner. She wants to be Indrek's phallus, in the manner that Lacan defined it as the signifier of the object of desire, or more significantly and broadly, as "a symbol signifying life" (Lacan 1977: 23).

For Lacan, the phallus indicates our distant and lost relationship to objects and things and to our own body. It refers to the proximity to life and sensuousness that we lose with language acquisition. It is the remainder of language or what we want back from nature, once we are split between body and language, being and speaking. The phallus is something neither sex has, though each hopes to get it — more life, more happiness, and more pleasure — from the other. Karin tries to win back the lost object by means of language, by speaking more and more, and doing so more and more hysterically, but the object cannot be regained by words. Words continue to mortify things. She cannot admit that the phallus is lost.

She is male-identified in an excessively competitive, imaginary way. Men are her measure and standard; her mind is fixated on comparisons between men and women. She reigns in a world of solitary, imaginary phallic sexuality, fundamentally a masturbatory

sexuality, as Lacan argued, where the other is recognized as necessary in an instrumental way for pleasure, but where the truth of this necessity, namely our castration by language and our alienation from being are not recognized. Without the experience of lack there can be no submission to the other's being that love requires. Even after the trial, Karin insists that a woman is man's "lightning rod" or his phallus; she is the one who mercifully guides and accepts the man's "lightning" or sexuality and who is, therefore, loved by him ((Tammsaare 1969: 403). Her words imply that the man is lacking, not she. He has the hole, not she; she is the one who fills it. She constructs herself as his phallus because she is blind to her own lack. Her words attack Indrek's completeness and subtly undermine him. Her female strategy is to make him nothing. Her central importance and role in the sexual relationship is something she can never surrender, not even momentarily, and it is something that needs for her constantly to be made explicit and to be spoken.

She complains that Indrek no longer worships her as he used to. (Ib. 190–1; 198) She misses being his "new law," his "lesson in love." (ib. 350) She is haunted by phrases he spoke to her during their courtship: "woman, manifest yourself" (ib.) and "so, now I know that the eye of no stranger has as yet seen you" (ib. 352). She asks: how does he know that from seeing her naked? Is it true? She has to find out and transgress. She claims that her adultery is, therefore, Indrek's fault. He provided the provocation. But above all she wants the whole truth about their relationship. She demands full knowledge of Indrek's changed desires and the total transparency of his being. Her demand for total revelation becomes the precondition for her belief in Indrek. Yet she disbelieves and devalues all such knowledge that he offers her about himself. She grows desperate in part because she senses that the whole truth is an illusion and inherently inaccessible and in part that she cannot get at it because it is unconscious, and therefore, it is not even in the other's power to reveal it to her. In defiance of any limit to the access she can have to an other human being, she turns a hysterical flood of threats, charges, and demands on Indrek, and accuses him of deceiving, cheating, lying, and of loving their maid, Tiina. He tells her people and things were created separate in order to remain separate and in order that there can be relationships. He is desperate to keep his marriage together. He grants her license and forgiveness and hopes that the phase that she is passing through will run its course and end.

But he also turns logically obdurate under her unremitting attacks, and finally, physically abusive. She believes he wants to drive her mad with his resistance and to be rid of her. She grows paranoid about the secret that Tiina has and that she accuses him of having. Secrets, silence, and losses raise her desire for their opposites. The forbidden, inaccessible, and hidden aggravate it as well. She is tormented by what she has no access to.

Karin is plagued by thoughts, and therefore, by doubts. Indrek tells her that marriage is not for thinking together but for living together (ib. 254). Karin, however, asks "But how then do you live, if you do not think?" Conscious thinking, tied inevitably to the binaries of language, forces her into radical skepticism. Like a shadow or nightmare version of Descartes, she doubts everything, and is consequently in a state of constant uncertainty and negativity. She has no trust in her own reason or in others. The doubt produces an unbearable tension from which she begs to be released. She is envious of Indrek's seemingly unshakable foundations (ib.) and maddened by Tiina's equally unshakable and decided self-containment (ib. 285). Her extreme ambivalence and oscillations between love and hate, belief and disbelief make her more and more unstable.

Karin turns to Indrek with her unappeasable demands for more love because she has no anchoring point within herself. However, since she does not believe in him, her demand turns into requirements for proofs of love. Love, however, has no proof; it is not subject to the laws of science or scientific methods of verification. She needs proof because there is for her no opening to the dimension of the real where belief is. Love needs a dimension of freedom that Karin lacks, which is belief and trust in an other whose full truth is ever hidden from us. She is limited to the imaginary and symbolic orders that constitute reality. Her demands for proof turn her desire into something empirical and material that provokes a physical acting out on both their parts. Indrek tries to withdraw more and more from the verbal violence and the physically increasingly sadomasochistic situation. He holds her mouth to make her listen and to show her who is the boss, but she bites his hand. Yet, his exasperated manhandling of her both arouses and satisfies her and makes her momentarily submissive: "the harder you held me, the better I felt" (ib. 265). But he cannot hold her hard enough to satisfy her desire so that she would not desire more.

She wants more and more happiness, knowledge, and clarity. She is insatiable and relentless.

The Symptom, Law, and the Ethics of the Real

Tammsaare's representation of their endless battles over words, logic, meanings, needs, and desires is almost unbearable to read but captures, graphically and with perfect verisimilitude, much of the worst of warring human egotism. His representation also makes clear that truth escapes language. Language allows only a partial truth or a half-saying. Words are a fiction. They capture only reality, not the real. What escapes is jouissance, the subject's deepest capacities for wordless pain and pleasure. Jouissance is at the core of every symptom and disconnected from the chain of signifiers. It belongs to the unsymbolizable real, which the subject accesses or glimpses only accidentally, in epiphanies, traumatic incidents, and other moments of rupture with reality.

By relentlessly pushing at the boundaries of their marital reality and at the boundaries of logic and such knowledge as is available to her about themselves, Karin in fact opens, in a classically hysterical manner, the way to a violent jouissance and a new truth. She pushes at Indrek's core until she provokes his unconscious together with a sequence of clearly insane thoughts in his head, which are disconnected from his lethal act and from any ethical reality. He experiences a vital and imperative desire to kill her. He shoots his five bullets in a state of murderous jouissance. He only missed killing her, as he later explains in court, because of his anxious and excessive desire to kill: "[I] wanted to kill, with my whole soul, so very much, with all of my soul" (Tammsaare 1969: 412). In court, he contradicts the defense and argues that he was not mad because he had clear thoughts in his head. He was thinking:

> although you are my Savior and have saved me, nonetheless I am going to kill you, because you are not worthy of having saved me. I want to take back my horrible sins once again and I want to try to save myself. (Ib.)

From the perspective of reality, however, the thoughts *are* mad. He does not need to kill anyone to reassume his sins nor does he need to kill anyone because they are unworthy of being his savior. He needs just to walk away. There is no logical necessity here between the thoughts and the act. The act however has the unconscious purpose of a vital cut, a severance that he is precisely not able to make only consciously or symbolically because it is imbedded for him in the real of his symptom. He needs to shoot her unconsciously to assert the separation between her and the iconic image of the Savior that he had superimposed on her. He also needs to sever the icon of religious holiness that he had superimposed on his marriage from it. The moment of crisis is a violent splitting of what had been fused and as if soldered. For him the fusion of her being and her image was his very love of her. And the sacredness of his marriage was a certitude in which his existence was moored. To break these metaphors is so painful that he can only do it with violence — a sudden, mad violence — an act of murder. He shoots her to murder what he has to kill in himself.

The triggering cause of his criminal act, as Indrek explains in court, was Karin's words: "Whom are you going to kill now?" (Ib. 408). If those words had not been spoken, he is certain that he would not be standing trial. With these words, she undoes the one thing that she had done for him: she had accepted his secret, the cause of his symptom: his mercy killing of his mother. With these words, she breaks the sacred promise she had given him never to remind him of this moment in his life again. With these cruel and cutting words, she defines him once again as the murderer that he had felt himself to be before she absolved him. Her words force him to recognize himself once again as the matricidal son, whom he had felt and judged himself to be after his mother's death.

He insists that he shot her, consciously and intentionally, because of these words, because these words refer him to the most excruciating and unspeakable moment in his life. They resubmitted him to a trauma: his mother's murder. He had confessed the matricide to her in order to drive her away. That she had accepted and forgiven him was for him an unimaginable consequence. Thus, these words compacted pain and pleasure to an inordinate degree. For him, they had the same import and significance that, in an earlier era, sacred words might have had, only these were words of the real. They had a content and weight such as no other words in his life had because they were in

contact with loss, guilt, love, and death. They were experience, shock, trauma — his wound, his symptom. They were words weighted with a reference to a real that had been wordless pain from which he had believed himself miraculously released.

If the imaginary builds our humanity and the symbolic our subjectivity, Indrek lost both in committing the act of matricide. The act plunged him into the real, an unbearable abyss of suffering, a hole that robbed him of any life. Her love and acceptance veiled this encounter with violence and death. She was his Saviour. Karin gave back to him his humanity and subjectivity. She re-affirmed and re-established his collapsed faith in his own ethical being, in his goodness, and the justness and goodness of his desire. He had thought that she had been able to do what he had not been able to do for himself: she had forgiven him his murder. For this reason he had loved her and their marriage. Their love and marriage barred the real of murder and death. He had believed that her agreement to marry him revealed that she forgave him completely. Their marriage was one with the forgiveness of sins. When Karin takes back her words, she takes from Indrek the belief in himself that she had restored and the deep bond he had forged with her because of her belief. With her retraction, she makes him once again the victim of the jouissance of his symptom and of the mad inner turbulence of his drives. The shooting is the expression of his wild drives and his own be-wild-erment or madness.

How significant her belief in his goodness was for him is evident when he asks in court: what if Christ came back and said your sins are not forgiven? Would not somebody shoot him? (Ib. 411). She had sheltered him from evil and had taken away his sin as Christ did for all sinners. She had not judged him. Love means there is one who does not judge you. She had been for him his Saviour, a Christ figure; she had forgiven him his deepest sin; and their marriage was for him, consequently, as if a substitute religion. Now he no longer hopes or wants to escape judgment. He takes back his sin, his immorality, and any claim he had to ethical status; he claims instead the radical evil of his being; he assumes his guilt and he asks the court to judge him. It is for him a defining moment of loss of belief in mercy, grace, forgiveness, and the illusion of salvation. He says mercy has, in fact, betrayed him more so than anything else in his life; what he seeks

instead is law and judgment. The moment opens up the question of how can a man live without beliefs?

When Indrek renounces his subjection to the ideals and desires of the big Other of religion, with its imaginary fantasy of maternal forgiveness, he opts for a judgment by the big Other of the Symbolic instead. He subjects himself to the law. In either case though, he is a man who is still operating according to the desire of the Other. The court, however, composed of judges who have seen millions die in the Great War, has little patience with what it refers to, disparagingly, as "one man's gun popping" (ib. 404). Their dismissal of his case and decision to let him go free — their refusal, in effect, to judge him — is a shock for Indrek; it is not only an unexpected but an unwelcome and disappointing ending to his expectations from the law. It signifies that the big Other is lacking. There is a hole in the symbolic. The law has no answer to his act, his symptom, or his human and ethical exigency.

The defense says that maybe in the future the courts will not search for guilt, but for some flaw, some defect, which one has acquired either at birth or from the environment (ib. 406). In other words, the big Other could be one's genes or social construction — the forces of race, class, sex, and gender — as we like popularly to say today. Indrek rejects the defense's search for an external culprit, the other who can be blamed. He judges and blames himself. Still, he wished, in a sense, to have his self-judgment as guilty in some way confirmed or evaluated by the Other of the law. The law, however, in so far as it answers him at all merely implies that he is someone who does not to know himself very well. The law turns Indrek back to himself. He is bitter and empty, but he is free of the ideals and desires of the Other. All he has is his own symptom. He has to learn to handle it without guidance from any Other.

When the court does not judge him, but lets him go, a free man, he condemns himself to digging the ditches that his father had left unfinished on the farm. His activity of making as it were holes into the ground echoes the state of his being, the holes in his being: his loss of love and of faith in others, in himself, and in the law. He has had contact in himself with murderous jouissance and he does not want any longer to escape this self-knowledge. He knows himself as evil. He chooses to believe in his act as his truth and as the thing he has to take responsibility for and deal with alone. He cannot be saved from it and he no longer wants to be saved from it. He no longer thinks that

salvation is possible. The religious model cannot be transferred to human reality. Belief arises in the real and in bodily acts, such as the murder Indrek committed. His experience of his murderous jouissance is an ethical truth about himself. His act, though mad, has in it this kernel of the truth of his jouissance. Human jouissance is not beautiful.

Perversely, for Karin the crime is proof of Indrek's love. She loves him more than ever for those gunshots at her, which are for her symbolic of his manhood, sexuality, possessiveness, and passion. Karin wants love to become a desire that is real. Being shot at gives her perverse sexual satisfaction. The act shifts her from the prison of the symbolic and imaginary dimension into the real and she is awed and silenced by its force. This thrust into the real, into a mindless, humanly disconnected act, which all her taunting unconsciously aimed to provoke, is a thrust into the purely carnal that satisfies her. It fulfills her fantasy of an absolute and lethal jouissance of being. But as a refusal of castration and limits, it is also still a refusal on her part of the kind of desire and love that castration makes possible. The *passage à l'acte*, to which she drives Indrek, has orgiastic value for her. She loves him more than ever and wants him to return home. He, however, rightly says that people who together are driven to crime must separate (ib. 416).

Karin is a perfect example of what in his table of sexuation Lacan calls phallic sexuality, but a phallic sexuality that ends in a more, in a beyond of perversity. It is desire going from the imaginarized body back towards unsymbolized flesh, towards the organism's drives and needs for a wild, primitive stimulation of the total being, without any limits. Karin is insistent, repetitious, and driven to attain this excess. In a last pursuit of Indrek, she finally encounters in her own end, the one thing that can arrest her. Death, the absolute master, finally stops her.

Love and Feminine Jouissance

Jouissance is the wildness at our carnal core. It is the maximum in painful pleasure that the organism can tolerate. Both desire and love tame jouissance, but love is more likely also to humanize it, whereas desire does not, necessarily, as we have seen in the case of Karin. Love deters the deterioration of phallic sexuality and the turn towards

perversion that desire is threatened by. Why is that? Karin desires; Tiina loves. What is the difference?

Jouissance splits and is redistributed at the moment of the sexual divide. Lacan's formulas of sexuation are about two forms of jouissance, not about gender. Lacan calls one form feminine jouissance and the other phallic jouissance, but it is important to stress that the formulas do not address gender division, but a fundamental variation in jouissance. Both sexes have phallic jouissance and both have at least some feminine jouissance. But there is an inclination to be preponderantly phallic or preponderantly feminine in one's enjoyment, regardless of sexual gender. Another way to put this is to say that there is no gender question in the real. The gender divide arises with the imaginary and the symbolic orders. Phallic jouissance tends to be excessively concerned with gender questions. Gender questions are omnipresent in Tammsaare's novel and possibly every conceivable difference between men and women that could ever be thought of is discussed at one point or another. The closer, however, we approach to the real, the less relevant become the specificities of sexual difference. For love, since it is also closer to the real for reasons we shall see, the gender issue is not paramount.

In order to be, love needs at least some feminine jouissance, some openness to something other than the phallic, some contact with the real and with fantasy. Feminine jouissance is the consequence of having some distance from the symbolic and of not being wholly submissive to and organized by symbolic structure and law, as women have, traditionally, not been, which is why they have often been aligned with madness, disorganization, lack of moral firmness and other such negatives that are the opposites of the symbolic order. For the same reason, women have also more readily than men been connected to silence, the body, fantasy, dreaming, love, and death. Women are the critics of language; they comprehend language as deficient, as not-all, i.e. as barred [Lacan writes the barred Other, as Ø with a line through it, as he does the split subject: $]. Language is opaque to fundamental questions about life and death. Thus, feminine jouissance is more on the side of silence. It knows love as something language cannot adequately explain or express.

It is not that love rejects language; no, the lover works hard to say the right things to the beloved just as the slave works hard for the master to save his life. Thus, love produces language; but the lover

with phallic desire works harder, whereas love, unlike desire, knows that love cannot be spoken. Love is Cordelia-like, more hesitant to speak. "What I say of love is assuredly that one cannot speak about it" (Lacan 1998: 12). Whereas desire is more on the side of the signifier, and its metonymy, love is more on the side of the signified. Love is a meaning, however, without a signified. It is a meaning that is more like a sign. It shows itself in a little glance, a smile, a gift, a gesture, or a look, such as little child in love gives one. Like the signified, such signs have more weight and significance than the signifier, thought unspoken. Love begins with such signs.

Both desire and love introduce a sense of lack, but in love the lack is more certain, therefore there is less ambivalence and less discussion about what is lacking, and how to make it good, and whose the lack is, the lover's or the beloved. Therefore, it is immune to the kind of madness, bewilderment, and perversion of desire that Karin experiences. Love and desire also fill lack differently; desire is inherently more tempted to try to deny or to fill the lack whereas love is more tolerant of the lack. A mere promise is able to fill love's lack for years, as it does for Tiina. Hence, love introduces a different kind of time and patience and waiting as is captured in the figure of Patient Griselda to which tradition Tiina belongs. Her patience comes in part from knowing that love cannot be forced. It is luck, chance, contingency, a momentary break in the chain of signifiers, an encounter with the real. Beyond our will, love happens.

To everyone, love gives emptiness, rather than fullness, because it is love that opens us up to the vastness of our expectations and our unrealized possibilities. This emptiness is one of the characteristics of love. It cannot be taken out of love. It is the traumatic part of love; the hole in love, its flaw, the stain in the great gift of love. It is also, therefore, the greatest challenge of love. To love one must be able to bear this dangerous sense of emptiness. Karin cannot tolerate it. Tiina can. Why?

Within love and desire, one can yield to having or not having the phallus. It is easier for love, being on the side of the not-all, to be on the side of not having or lack and thereby to forego or avoid the sado-masochistic ego struggle of who is whole, who is master. Tiina knows that the phallus is lost; she can accept that. She does not see herself as Indrek's or any man's lightning rod or phallus. She has no need to hide her lack. She has the "self-seeing glasses" that give her an

awareness of her own nonbeing and defects. Thus, Tiina already knows that the evil and anger are in her, not in others or in the forks and knives (Tammsaare 1969: 291).

It is because the phallus (or life) is lost that sexuality is for Tiina just one of the ways we search for it. Sex is a gift, but love is beyond sex. "When one loves, it has nothing to do with sex" (Lacan 1998: 25). And precisely because Tiina knows that sex is not the all of love, she has no inhibitions about going to sleep with Indrek in the sauna before they are married, although others around her consider it immoral. Love has nothing to do with Puritanism. Though in no way devaluing the body, Tiina knows love as something that the body cannot adequately express. It is something neither the body nor language can adequately express.

It is because Tiina showed him her lack as a child and again as an adult woman that she wins Indrek to her. As a child she wins a promise from him and as an adult she makes him fulfill his promise. Tiina comprehends almost intuitively that lack is structural to the human being. It is because she is able to show her lack of having, and therefore, her desire for him that Indrek comes to desire her. It is because he feels that she desires him and desires the phallus from him that he comes to believe that he has it. It is why she can go to the sauna. Yet, that is not why he loves her.

Love is more mindful of being and nonbeing than having or not having. Love is on the side of being and existence. "Love aims at being" (ib. 39). Tiina is able just to be near Indrek for years, even though he barely notices her, not to mention desiring her. During all these years she maintains herself by work and by belief. It is paradoxical, but because love makes one happier than desire, it expects less. As she tells Karin, she does not believe that will have more and more happiness. "Without a man [life] is often terribly hard and therefore why should it only be easy with a man?" But with a man one can also be happy. This bit of happiness, she says, would be the thought of marriage, which is for her the "the most beautiful [thought] that she is capable of thinking" (Tammsaare 1969: 286–7). And if one is happy, of what significance is heartache? She is already happy thinking of how happy she might be when she is the happiest one can be: happy despite and within great hardship and difficulty.

Tiina is a realist compared to Karin, who wants excess, who thinks that perfect happiness is possible, who has an oppressive and rigid ideal of desire to which she wishes her life and her marriage to conform. She lives under an imperative of desire as love. Tiina has the wisdom to know the dangerous paradox of desire, and the wisdom not to hope for complete fulfillment or to bind herself to the law of desire and it impossibility. She accepts the emptiness of desire and knows how to fulfill herself without the other and in the solitude of her own feminine jouissance.

Love is happier than desire because it already has more of that necessary and vital proximity to being than desire has. Being more alienated from language, love is less alienated from being. Without anything but her belief, Tiina already has happiness. Her belief is what makes her happy. She has only a "promise," but she is able to fill it with life. Her belief in this promise is the way she sustains herself and it is the core of her feminine jouissance. Thus Tiina, though utterly without anything and seemingly in great privation, has, compared to Karin, more than the latter.

At the fundamental entrance and exit to the real is belief or disbelief. Tiina is at that threshold. What she represents to Indrek is her belief. Indrek tells her has no need for a woman, but she talks him into taking back his words and accepting her as she originally did as a child when he took back his words about the nonexistence of god because he saw she needed him to. He did it because he understood then that the loss of belief is always traumatic. She needs him now to live, she says; she needs him to keep his promise because that is what keeps her going and moving. She has for years believed in him and in his words. Now he needs to prove that her having believed him was not an error, not a mistake, that there really is such a thing as the other human being's response to her and her need. The force of her belief takes Indrek aback. Having lost all his own beliefs, he is astonished at the very persistence and insistence of her belief. She confronts him with the truth of her existence, without which, as she says, her body and her life would make no sense to her. Seeing this unexpected, inexplicable, nonsensical belief stirs his memories, and moves him to accept her, and his own life once again. He steps to the threshold of the real. He understands what she is saying because he has been living like a dead man without any belief himself.

At the moment, Tiina shows him her need, and lack, and belief or her symptom, she shows him his own symptom, and at that moment, he can love her. He recognizes his own symptom in her. He recognizes her as his soul. "He takes the other as his soul" (Lacan 1998: 82). But once Eros and the soul or Psyche are reunited, as Apuleius tells us, their "union could never be broken" (Hamilton 1998: 100).

Thus Tiina is the representative of love as a state where desire is tamed by feminine jouissance. Love invariably requires belief, and feminine jouissance, freed to a degree from domination by the symbolic, is more readily able to believe. Belief is the secret of Tiina's inner happiness in that it puts a stop to the infinite pressure of ever-unfulfilled and ever insufficient desire by positing a hypothetical, though possible fulfillment. It plugs up the hole of desire in part or makes desire tolerable. It prevents desire from becoming insatiable, unarrestable, and dangerous. Belief comes from love. In love, therefore, the stasis, the stop to being ravaged by desire comes not from the imaginary icon, or from the real or death, but from belief. A belief in fulfillment is very different from a demand for fulfillment. Belief pacifies desire precisely because it does not yet fulfill it, but promises fulfillment.

A real event, an act, such as Indrek's near murder of his wife, shows reality up as mere appearances. The act leads to his sheer nonbelief (*Unglauben*). In disbelief there is still often a warring and resistant agency and passion; in nonbelief there is indifference or paranoia. His nonbelief, which gave him a vision of the world as merely fictious, unreal, and worthless made him turn back to the land, the maternal, and to work. Tiina offers him something else, something that belongs neither to reality, the world of appearances and doubt, nor to the real, but to what is at the threshold, belief or disbelief. And her belief points to the other side of appearances as neither the real nor, as it was in classical times, the essential, noumenal, or universal, but as to something simple and human: the possibility of some happiness in the inevitable coexistence of happiness and unhappiness (Tammsaare 1969: V 404).

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On Weighing the Past: *Vergangenheitsbewältung* and the Prose of Ene Mihkelson and Christa Wolf[1]

TIINA KIRSS

On a warm day in May 2003 the documentary film *Sõda pärast sõda* (The War After the War) is being shown in the Estonian Literature Museum in Tartu. Director Peeter Simm and scriptwriter Eerik-Niiles Kross seek to evoke the unofficial memory of the guerrilla warfare waged in the aftermath of World War II in Estonian forests by the "Forest Brethren" (metsavennad). Framed by lyrical landscapes of early springtime frosts in the woodlands of Estonia, the salty voices and stories of surviving Forest Brethren splice together a heroic oral tradition of prolonged defiance, starvation, the bait of "amnesty", raids by the NKVD, withholding under torture, years in Siberia. Young boys in present-day Estonia are shown watching wide-eyed as former Forest Brother Alfred Käärmann, author of memoirs in the form of "survival manuals" speaks of everyday life in a partisan bunker, gives instructions on how to build one and how to behave under siege.[2] The camera shifts

[1] Previous versions of material in this paper were presented at the 5th Conference of Baltic Studies in Europe, 5–7 June 2003 at the University of Turku, Finland, and the 5th International Conference of the Estonian Comparative Literature Association, 28 September–1 October 2003.

[2] Alfred Käärmann, *Metsavenna käsiraamat.* Tallinn: SE& JS, 1999; *Sissitegevuse käsiraamat.* Tallinn: Kroonu klubi, 2002. Käärmann has also published his memoirs: *Surmavaenlase vastu: Eesti lõunapiiri metsavenna mälestusi.* Tartu: Tartu UP, 2000. A popular history of the Forest Brethren movement has been written by Mart Laar (*Metsavennad.* Tallinn: Helmet Raja & Company, 1993, also published abroad under the title *Suurim Armastus I, Metsavennad.* Stockholm: Välis-Eesti & EMP, 1994).

to footage of guerrilla war games used to train men doing Estonian military service for the new republic, suggesting that a tradition of resistance has been incorporated into today's reality. My glance skips across the room to the face of Ene Mihkelson, whose novel *Ahasveeruse uni* (*The Sleep of Ahasuerus*, 2001) has posted a much thornier monument to the Forest Brethren movement. Simm and Kross' educational and inspiring film has left out some of the small print — the degree of infiltration of the ranks of the Forest Brethren by spies and informers, the banality of betrayal, and the complicated but stark dependence of the Forest Brethren on people in the local countryside for food, care, shelter, and a place to hide. The shadow side of this dependence is the perspective of the partisan as perpetrator of retaliatory, even gratuitous violence — raids on rural general stores in which store workers or those suspected of collaboration were murdered in cold blood, deeds that seem to support official Soviet cliches of "banditry". Ene Mihkelson's face in the audience bears flickers of skepticism and humour. Her own novel is the antithesis of a flow of visual images, a demythologizing indictment of the sacral metanarrative of heroic resistance. By its form alone, the optical prism of subjectivity it invents, the novel insists that its reader submit to a steep learning curve of difficulty and undertake the "weighing" of the postwar Estonian past.

Vergangenheitsbewältigung as project, imperative, and sum of cultural and political processes has provoked and included widespread reflection in postwar German literature on the paradoxical relations between "difficult forms" and the representation of subjectivity and voice, history and memory. Post-Wende, new ironic dimensions have been imparted not only to the political debates on *Vergangenheitsbewältigung,* but to the formal means and contexts in which it is carried out. It has increasingly been recognized that *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* East and West have had not only different ideological scaffoldings but also different temporalities. For example, Julia Hell has convincingly argued that the appearance of the Holocaust as a theme in the literature of the former East Germany is "belated", and that its representation is deeply implicated in the representation of gender. "Belatedness" also pertains to the reception of Christa Wolf's *Was bleibt*, a chilling novel about censorship and Stasi surveillance written in 1979 but published only a decade later. The "case" of *Was bleibt* is itself a cautionary tale about the hazards of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*.

In Estonia, public derepression of the past since 1991 has been undertaken steadily but gingerly, with at least some balanced public voices urging recognition that the brushing-in of suppressed chapters of social memory is insufficient to fill gaps that would require full-fledged and careful historical research, for which some argue that it is still "too early". Likewise, professional historians issue reminders that "restorative" history too often and too easily serves "restitutionary" politics, for which a poorly nuanced and golden image of the 1930s is a template.[3] Historian and former Minister for the Defence Hain Rebas observes that not only the term but the concept of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* is glaringly absent from contemporary Estonian public and academic discourse, and that the inability to come to terms with the "recent and middle past" is revealingly illustrated by the proliferation of nation-building myths about Estonian pre-history (e.g. Estonians have lived on their land for at least 5000 years). According to Rebas, conscious and unconscious ideological habits and knee-jerk reactions, relics of the Soviet era, still shape understandings and writing about the past three quarters of a century. Nevertheless, he sees *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* as a sign of health and as a necessity, and calls for its beginning with open discussion of the biographies of members of his own academic fraternity the Estonian University Students' Society (Eesti Üliõpilaste Selts), particularly their choices and behaviour during World War II and its immediate aftermath, and extending to a range of institutional lustration efforts. Rebas urges his compatriots to clean out the Augean stables of Estonia following the model of post-Wende Germany, assured that despite the unforeseen hazards of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, the ideals and practices of democracy would in the end prevail in both places. Rebas' confidence in the German analogy is highly debatable in itself, but public events in the last few years attending the accession of Estonia to the European Union, and the public stir around World War II veterans' monuments in Lihula in September 2004 have demonstrated the

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[3] In a recent article Estonian historian Jüri Kivimäe has examined the dangers of short-circuiting disciplined historical inquiry by an uncritical use of "memory texts," including oral histories and written life stories. He points to the need for a source-criticism adequate for the interpretation of such autobiographical materials, and for shrewd attention to the ways in which such sources serve projects of national mythologization. ("Mnemosyne köidikud: Ajalood, elulood ja mälu," *Vikerkaar* 10–11 (2003), 84–89.

lability of the pain threshold around World War II, and the degree to which social memory is contested. *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* has only just begun, and the rather sinister term "thoroughness" is no simple desideratum, but fraught with a host of dangers. By no means does "thoroughness" alone guarantee "successful" coming to terms with the shadows of the past. Clearly, a crucial part of the process is serious dialogue among trained professional historians and the writing of history within the academy.

To what extent and in what ways literary texts can and do participate in the discursive processes of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* remains an open question; as such it is another variant of debates about literature's "engagement" with social and political realities and the power of the imaginative word to shape those realities. Unavoidably, the question of literary efficacy in fostering *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* is caught up with processes of reception and canonicity, the constitution and maintenance of a readership, the marketing of books, the formation of a body of "nationally significant" texts. The forbidding formal complexity of Ene Mihkelson's fictions, for which *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* is an overarching subject and the very territory on which the fictions are performed--calls to mind Christa Wolf's novels and essays, particularly *Kindheitsmuster* (1977), the novel in which Wolf broaches the legacy of her own Nazi childhood. *Kindheitsmuster*, translated into Estonian under the title *Lapsepõlvelõimed* in 1982, is contemporaneous with *Matsi põhi*, the first of Mihkelson's "trilogy" of fictions about the legacy of the Forest Brethren, collectivization, and Siberian deportation in the late 1940s.[4] Parallel intentionalities and their

[4] *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* shows its intense pertinence to the initial publication and reception of *Kindheitsmuster*. The novel was published in the aftermath of a watershed event for DDR intellectuals, the expatriation of *liedermacher* Wolf Biermann in November 1976. Christa Wolf and her husband Gerhard Wolf were cosignatories of a letter of protest by prominent writers published in „Neue Deutschland." As a consequence, Gerhard Wolf was expelled from the SED and Christa Wolf removed from her prominent role on the executive committee of the Writers' Union. Efforts to palliate an intractable confrontation with the creative intelligentsia meant that no official sanctions in the form of publication delays were imposed on books scheduled to appear in the ensuing months. The first edition of *Kindheitsmuster* was published on schedule and the 60,000 copies were sold out by February 1977; the novel was given favourable reviews. Symptomatic readings of the novel

philosophical justifications can be found in Wolf's and Mihkelson's novels: particularly compelling are affinities in the ways in which subjectivity is represented as a programmatic set of hindrances for the reader, who must be disabused not only of specific myths and falsehoods about interpreting the past, but also of more comprehensive illusions about easy access to metabolizing the past altogether. [5]

The following comparative study of Christa Wolf's novel *Kindheitsmuster* and Ene Mihkelson's *Ahasveeruse uni* will examine *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* both as theme and process of individual and social remembering, as represented in both works through the palimpsestic mutual implication of many pasts and places.

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in both East and West German criticism, however, predictably attenuated the force of the novel in its detailed reconstruction of a Nazi childhood, but in opposite directions; GDR critics saw the novel as engaged with the prehistory of the GDR, not with contemporary politics; West German critic Hans Mayer regarded it as an „allegory of socialism," a novel about the present, not a provocative contribution to the burgeoning wave of *Vergangenheits-bewältigung* fiction. (see Judith Ryan for a more detailed exposition of the critical crosswinds around *Kindheitsmuster*).

[5] The context of Christa Wolf's development of the concept of *Subjektive Authentizität* requires a thorough discussion of her confrontation with the prose of Austrian writer Ingeborg Bachmann, through which she charted her own course beyond the confines of socialist realism. As Barbara Dröscher points out, in the 1966 essay „Die Zumutbare Wahrheit" Wolf sees in Bachmann's practice of prose an "emancipatory step" beyond the literary horizon of socialism realism. (72). The keys to a richer, ultimately more socially responsible prose are sensitivity and truthfulness, key-words that canons of socialist realism sum up under the negatively coded category of „subjectivity.": „Ingeborg Bachmann bot dagegen Empfindsamkeit, Dünnhäutigkeit bei Schärfe des Begriffs und Wahrhaftigkeit als Identifikationsmerkmale." (73) For my purposes here the traces of the Bachmann-Wolf encounter can only be suggestively pointed out, not analyzed in detail. However, Bachmann remains a crucial intertext for Mihkelson as well, partner in an implicit dialogue palpable particularly in *Ahasveeruse uni*, and worth a separate, more detailed inquiry.

The Necessity of Impediments

Though the literary text has been implicated in mystification, mythologization, and ideological justification, it has been variously and compellingly argued that it can also create a site for remembering, repeating, and working through the past. Such an argument is not necessarily limited to acknowledgment of a function for "testimonial" literature — the insertion into readers' consciousness of previously unacknowledged and unvoiced material about the past, making room in the canon for writing from the position of victim and survivor. Rather, or in addition, "difficult" texts using postmodern formal repertoires can and do model for readers critical and complex stances toward the past, enacting cognitive dissonance, denial, and mechanisms of defence that operate in the individual psyche, various levels of collectivity, and institutions invested in generating and preserving authoritative versions of the past. Literary texts devised for such purposes announce their intentionality to serve as impediments, instruments for preventing easy access to the past, providing instead a set of lenses whereby the past in its multiple subjectivities and overdeterminations can be recognized, worked over, and worked through.

As practiced in her own texts, Christa Wolf's quest for a poetics of "subjective authenticity" (*Subjektive Authentizität*) entails a refusal of premature closure, even of formal framing. While she tacitly acknowledges the appeal of Walter Benjamin's concept of "dialectical images", Wolf refuses the comfort of presenting the past in the form of coherent images embellished and adorned by encrustations of story, of framing the past as snapshots in a family album.[6] Instead, in

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[6] The suspicion and restriction of narrative voiced in *Kindheitsmuster* has been articulated elsewhere in essayistic form by Christa Wolf: She issues a caution regarding "memory-nuggets," which turn into the coherent vignettes or "medallions" of which many memoirs are composed. Wolf links calcified tubercular lesions to moral judgments, both equally pathological in their buried rigidity: "Diese Medaillons sind für die Erinnerung, was die verkalkten Kavernen für den Tuberkulosekranken, was die Vorurteile für die Moral: ehemals aktive, jetzt aber durch Einkapselung stillgelegte Lebensflecken." In essence, this is a warning against aesthetic coherence and the contemplative attitude, in favour of a more active, interventionist critical rewriting of the past. In order to counter the inert toxicity of submerged memory with questioning, critique, and revision, prose should also resist "filmable"

Kindheitsmuster she sets up an apparatus of reflexivities and split subjectivities, in which she can regard herself as narrator and recollected child of the Nazi era, observing herself in the double act of writing in the third person and seeing herself as a character in her own novel. She preempts herself in the act of attempting to speak in the confessional-testimonial first-person singular (Ich), let alone in the more dangerous first-person plural, at the threshold of which she does not arrive until the very end of the novel. In another postmodern turning, narrative is held suspect for its very seductive continuities: the seemingly innocuous act of storytelling could reinforce a morally hazardous severance of past from present. First-person autobiography is a well-known tool for self-legitimation (*apologia pro vita sua*); for Wolf, autobiographical narrative is implicitly discredited even when cast in an explicitly therapeutic framework of self-analysis and self-inquisition, as it may falsely attribute coherence, accessibility and compliance to the self. It is only a restored dialectical tension between past and present that is the positive harvest of mourning, and the only safeguard against historical repetition on both individual and collective levels. There are three main narrative lines of the novel — a brief, intense 48-hour return visit in July 1971 to the narrator's hometown of Landsberg, now in Poland; the retrospective pursuit of Nelly, and the process of composing the novel. "Engaging" a novel such as *Kindheitsmuster* insists that the reader move vertically as into a dream or an excavation site, making subjectivity thicker, rigging it to slow down the process of making contact with the past in all of its vicious contradiction and political loadedness.

Kindheitsmuster opens without warning in the midst of the narrator's meditative dialogue with herself about the preconditions and difficulties of her project to remember her childhood. In the opening sentence of the first chapter, leaning on the double force of the nominal and verbal forms, "das Vergangene" and "vergangen", she identifies the flaw in everyday notions of the past: "Das Vergangene ist nicht tot; es nicht einmal vergangen. Wir trennen es von uns ab und stellen uns fremd." (9) Once effected, this deliberate and morally culpable alienation can only be overcome through

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narrative: „die Prosa sollte danach streben, unverfilmbar zu sein. Sie sollte von dem gefährlichen Handwerk ablassen, Medaillons in Umlauf zu bringen und Fertigteile zusammenzusetzen." (481) („Medaillons," in Lesen und Schreiben, reprinted in *Die Dimension des Autors*.)

strenuous effort, since the conscious ego supports its maintenance. Through a series of two movements early in the first chapter, the narrator proposes a new, demanding kind of autobiographical pact and formulates a provisional mechanism of narration whereby the alienation can be confronted if not undone. This shift, as performed in the poetry of Paul Celan, and called for both in Celan's and Christa Wolf's own Büchner Prize acceptance speeches, goes to the roots and substance of language. Wolf 's opening to *Kindheitsmuster* not only names but performs the linguistic operations for a revised subject position. At first there seems to be a stark duality, an impasse between silence , which is rejected, and an as yet unexplained "life in the third person": "Allmählich, über Monate hin, stellte sich das Dilemma heraus: sprachlos bleiben oder in der dritten Person leben, das scheint zur Wahl zu stehen. Das eine unmöglich, unheimlich das andere (9)". The initial "uncanniness" of writing in the third person is accepted, but it is not enough. What is sought after is a third, mediating term, allowing a projected self to be addressed dialogically: "Zwischen dem Selbstgespräch und der Anrede findet eine bestürzende Lautverschiebung statt, eine fatale Veränderung der grammatischen Bezüge. Ich, du, sie, in Gedanken ineinandersschwimmend, sollen im ausgesprochenen Satz einander entfremdet warden." (9). A prophylactic alienation (Entfremdung), an insistently subjectivized Brechtian operation, becomes a method of writing designed to counteract the catastrophic state of the subject's severance from the past. The gesture requires grammatical acrobatics and results in a radicalized, multilayered and multivoiced autobiographical writing, which does not (yet) abandon narrative. In *Kindheitsmuster*, subjectivity is split into a threefold projection: the narrator's child-self is given the name Nelly and will be written in the third person, while the writing subject engages both faces of her remembering self in the more intimate and demanding "Du". The "Du" in turn has a double addressee — the self that makes the return journey to her hometown is interrogated retrospectively, while the writing self that reflects upon that journey is called to account for the process she is engaged in. The "Du" and "Nelly" layers of the text overlap, irrupt into each other, but do not engage in dialogue: they are preconditions for the reconstitution of a voice tentatively referred to as "Ich". As the narrator (still in the Du voice) recognizes, just as the quest for Nelly is asymptotic and fraught with a gradually revealed violence, thus also "full" or healed

subjectivity is an idealized endpoint rather than a real accomplishment. The voice of the "Ich" can at best be heard episodically, haltingly, and tentatively near the end of the text.[7]

The impediment in Ene Mihkelson's novel *Ahasveeruse uni*, similarly constructed as a "subjectivity machine", can be likened to the steep threshold of an old Estonian farmhouse, designed to keep young children in and farm animals out. The first nineteen chapters of the novel, fully one third of its length, confront the unsuspecting reader with a double set of dialogues: one between the narrator and her mother Vilma, herself a partisan and widow of a Forest Brother, and the other between the narrator and a split-off aspect of herself. The mother-daughter "dialogue" carries over from Mihkelson's previous novels *Matsi põhi* (1983) and *Nime vaev* (1994), and stages a narrative of maternal abandonment and missed connections. The internalized dialogue between "selves" is intertwined with dreamwork and travel reportage of a journey to Austria in the post-Soviet era. After the difficult initiation of the reader, who submits to and struggles with the alternating dialogues, and feels the voices with no explanation or exegesis, the narrator switches gears into a more linear quest plot, in which she searches the archives and interviews witnesses to discover how her partisan father died. Despite its dynamism and the seeming coherence of the narrating subject, this plot is an infinite deferral, a dead end; the scene of death eludes her, giving way instead to a caustic and relentless demythologization of the heroic metanarrative of the Forest Brethren movement.

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[7] The connection between intensive engagement with the „stuff" or raw material of subjectivity and the risks of using the first person can be seen in one of Christa Wolf's earliest formulations of the concept of *Subjektive Authentizität*, which is here being defined in relation and in oblique opposition to the aesthetic prescriptions of socialist realism: „Dies ist durchaus ' eingreifende Schreibweise, nicht 'subjektivistische'. Allerdings setzt sie ein hohes Mass an Subjektivität voraus, ein Subjekt, das bereit ist, sich seinem Stoff rückhaltlos (das sagt man so hin; hedenfalls so rückhaltlos wie möglich) zu stellen, das Spannungsverhältnis auf sich zu nechmen, das dann unvermeidlich wird; auf die Verwandlung neugierig zu sein, die Stoff und Autor dann erfahren(...) es wird viel schwerer 'ich' zu sagen, und doch zugleich oft unerlässlich. Die Suche nach einer Methode, dieser Realität schreibend gerecht zu werden, möchte ich vorläufig 'subjektive Authentizität' nennen... en Bemühen darstellt, sich mit ihr (der Realität) produktiv auseinanderzusetzen." (*Die Dimension des Autors*, 780)

"Impeding devices" in Mihkelson's earlier novels include the use of italicized passages of internalized speech, adversarial dialogues with imaginary others, and in the novel *Nime vaev* (*The Labour of Naming*, 1994) staged dialogues with four alter-egos. The necessity for the impediment in both Wolf's and Mihkelson's projects is twofold, related both to social processes of denial and defense, and to the potentially overwhelming process of the return of the repressed for the individual psyche. The text points in both directions, outward into the social world, and into an inner labyrinth; on the one hand, it traps and hinders facile and habituated responses to the past; on the other, it tempers the floodtide of memory, creating a provisional container for what might emerge.

In *Ahasveeruse uni* the narrator extracts the compelling image of the blizzard-room (*tuisutuba*) from a combination of dreams and waking dreams as a liminal space for remembering. The temporal location of the blizzard room is between the Forest Brethren bunker in the woods where her father perished and a familiar room with wide windows near the Russian church in Tartu, framed by a shadowy memory of the slats of her bed as a child. Against this lyrically multivalent backdrop Mihkelson posits the structure of subjectivity that will govern the novel's first nineteen chapters: "Now it is starting again, I thought, almost immediately at the moment of completing the last sentence: that condition of being multiple, that daily alternation between sleep and waking, where I cannot be sure of the light and the shadows and the seasons. She speaks about me as herself and I about her, because I see her sometimes inside me, and then again from outside altogether. I mention years, newspapers, and events, she talks about a dream which continues. We are stuck inside our bodies or in the time in which the story reveals itself, as from within a room tossed into a landscape, so that the city, the house, and the apartment clears and disappears in the coincidental patches of remembering." (22)

At the Borders of Consciousness

In both Wolf and Mihkelson, the writing method entails a finely-tuned practice of awareness to catch the emergent contents of consciousness and simultaneously to record the process of resistance. In *Ahasveeruse uni* two superimposed chiastic dialogues dramatize this resistance, one

between facets of the self, the other between the narrator and her mother Vilma. The style and structure of both are explicitly situated in relation to the Ur-scenario of interrogation:

> And you did not study any more than was absolutely necessary for your exams?
>
> Yes-yes-yes — at least where languages were concerned, I surrounded myself almost with a wall of stupidity, but secretly I kept reading books in at least one foreign language. My window on Europe was that Russian window chopped into the Baltic region three centuries ago.
>
> Then you did study Russian after all — I asked. In reality I had studied several languages, but at some point was overcome by something like a dimming, a darkening of the windows, because Vilma, Agatha, Maali, and Alfred, who after all mattered to me in some basic respect, always talked about how it was so much better not to know anything about dangerous things. How much better to say that you have not heard-seen-met, because a body with its tender human flesh could never hope to withstand a marathon of interrogations.
>
> It is better that you do not know what happened to your father, better that you do not know what happened to your parents, then it would be impossible to squeeze anything out of you, even by "special treatment".
>
> No, I have nothing to tell you, answered Vilma, after she came out of the forest. (107, all translations mine)

While she herself grew up in a claustrophobic semirural Soviet social environment, where fear of interrogation muffled family conversations and curiosity about other worlds and languages, the narrator's famine for retrospective truth-telling casts her unwittingly as her mother's interrogator. For this there is no apology and mercy. In the psychic economy of *Ahasveeruse uni* the narrator only redoubles the intensity of her self-interrogation as she encounters her mother's resistance and denial. Neither is spared, and each response in the dialogue seems to release a layer of suppressed shame. Caution is the legacy of the narrator's mother's side of the family, but the price of this has been high, resulting in an evasion and repression of knowledge about her

father's side of the family tree "Protective" silence within families is not easily nor automatically reversible; the latent toxicity of family secrets is rarely predictable. Behind the strategic suppression of a politically contaminated family background are even murkier layers of the family romance — the mistaken identities of the narrator's father and his fellow combatant Kaarel Kolgamets, the possibility of a love triangle in the partisan bunker; Vilma still holds Meinhard, her dead husband and the narrator's father, guilty for her senseless self-sacrifice as a member of the Forest Brethren. The implied reader is caught in the space in which the mother-daughter dialogue seems doomed to fail, just as, in the numerous dream-texts reported in the novel, the reader is made privy to the narrator's symbol-laden "reports from the interior".

Christa Wolf's writing method likewise entails a heightened awareness and synchronous reporting from the borders of consciousness. Crucial to the narrative of Chapter 10 of *Kindheitsmuster* are two dream-texts, of which the second is more significant for the linking of personal and social processes. During the narrator's return to her hometown, L., a dream interrupts a pleasant late-afternoon rest stop on the "other side of the bridge". In waking life, this is a poor part of town the narrator seldom frequented in earlier days, but which yields a beautiful view worthy of a postcard photograph. The dream brings together an unlikely combination of people — two schoolmates, Walpurga and Vera, and the concentration camp survivor Jossel, the narrator's friend from an earlier time period; the three are having an intimate conversation on a street in the town of L. Reflection on the dream yields a disturbing realization about Nelly, the narrator's child-self: had a younger version of Jossel visited L, he would more likely have kept company with these two young women of Christian background, than with Nelly, wrapped up as she was in her participation in the *Jungmädelbund* of the *Hitlerjugend*, and in pursuit of the approbation of her teacher and mentor Juliane Strauch. The purpose of the dream seems to have been to point out this incongruity, which casts an unanticipated shadow over the narrator's adult friendship with Jossel: "Falls es die Absicht des Traumes gewesen war, auf diese bestürzende Tatsache hinzuweisen, hatte er seinen Zweck erfüllt." (203)

Beyond this specific interpretation of the dream, the narrator moves to a more extended reflection on consciousness and amnesia. The crossover into an extraordinarily dense passage on memory-loss takes place via a phrase that is repeated later in the chapter, generating

further ripple-effects: "Die Wächter vor den Toren des Bewusstseins abziehen." (203). In keeping with Freud's theory of dreamwork, it is indeed the function of dreams to withdraw (or at least temporarily to disarm) the guards from the gates of consciousness, allowing unconscious material to pass through in disguise. As the following passage shows, however, the calamity demanding the guards' withdrawal is a new kind of memory loss that the narrator contrasts with the more benignly unreliable memory she has of the events of her early childhood. Loss of memory regarding early childhood is described in terms of blank or white spots on a sunny landscape ("jene verschwommenen oder weissen Flecken auf einer merkwürdigen, besonnen Landschaft"), a landscape not unlike the postcard panorama of L. that the narrator was looking at when she fell asleep. The loss of consciousness in relation to the childhood landscape is described with a second metaphor, a drifting hot-air balloon that casts its own shadow: "über die das Bewusstsein dahintreibt wie ein Fesselballon im wechselnden Wind, der natürlich seinen eigenen Schatten wirft" (203). The second, newer memory loss that the dream has provoked the narrator to name involves a consciousness that is not only entangled in past events and unable to transcend them, but one that has experienced a partial darkening or "brownout": "Jetzt aber scheint das Bewusstsein selber, verstrickt in die Vorgänge, über die es erinnernd erheben sollte, einer Teil-Verdüsterung zu unterliegen." (203). The military metaphor here is eloquent and explicit, drawn from the repertoire of wartime daily experience of darkening windows in a city under bombardment. To this is added a second reference to the not necessarily modern "guards at the gate" of a consciousness shadowed by repressed material that has a stake in actively maintaining the structures that defend its borders.

Uncannily, Mihkelson's narrator uses the same metaphor of darkened windows in the above-quoted dialogue about learning foreign languages. "It is better not to know about dangerous things," advise the adults in Mihkelson's narrator's immediate environment. The literal provenance of the metaphor (which uses the specific word for blackout, "pimendus") is, as in Wolf's text, realia and relic of "ordinary" life in wartime. Its deeper resonance is to the socialized learning of psychic defenses, camouflaging as far as possible those aspects of the family political profile that would lead to stigmatization and "repressions": interrogations, imprisonment, deportation. On a

second level, suppression of certain memory contents seems to be a proactive protective measure for interrogation and torture. The price, what the narrator terms a "wall of stupidity", is the muting of a child's naturally lively curiosity about difference, and her drive to expand her linguistic horizons.

In the passage from Mihkelson's novel, one marker of amnesia is the narrator's mother's refusal to speak of her experiences with the Forest Brethren, in turn deeply rooted in her blame of Meinhard: as a result she has systematically and stubbornly refused to give the narrator any access to information about Meinhard's side of the family. Deeper still is the forgetfulness of Kaarel Kolgamets, the narrator's parents' closest companion in the partisan bunker, and the man with whom her father "exchanged identities" at death, thus living on under her father's name. Kolgamets is the narrator's principal witness, whom she cross-examines over the course of several visits while seeking to reconstruct the scenario of her father Meinhard's death and the "last battle" in the partisan bunker. Kaarel Kolgamets' amnesia has, however, crossed over to deliberate revision of memory: he has written a self-righteous and self-justifying life history and submitted it to the official archives. He has also been decorated as a freedom fighter by the new Estonian republic. The narrator is immersed in the ironic force field of disparities between what is written for public remembrance and innuendoes that point to a much more paradoxical and indicting account of Kolgamets' involvement in the Forest Brethren.

In *Kindheitsmuster*, the definition of the concept of "moral memory" is further reinforced by a parenthetical reference to Adolf Eichmann's notoriously bad memory. As far as the narrator is concerned, repression must be countered, if not through a removal of the "guards at the gate" through a will to truth (utopian, but impossible), then at least through a conscious refusal to accept falsifications and inventions: "Doch bleibt es dabei, dass Erfindungen ausscheiden und die Erinnerungen an Erinnerungen, die Erinnerungen an Phantasien nur als Informationen aus zweiter Hand verwendet werden konnen, als Spiegelungen, nicht als Realität" (203). The process of weighing one's personal past is a "subjective correlative" to the social process of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung,* its synecdoche. Its precondition is a conscious reversal of self-censorship, the deconstruction of the social habitus that held self-censorship in place.

For this telling the story of one's past may be a starting point, but must be seen as insufficient and seductively mystifying. Ironically, canonical texts from the literary tradition, deeper layers of the cultural-historical past, provide some of the tools for reversing self-censorship. Neither Wolf as author nor her narrator fully abdicate their faith in this redemptive function of the canon. The repeatedly quoted phrase regarding the guards at the gates of consciousness is implicitly attributed to Schiller, intimately familiar with the subject of censorship.(das grosse und vielschichtige Problem der Selbstzensur). For the narrator's own contemporaries, self-censorship, with its energy-intensive self-surveillance (Selbstbewachung und Selbstbespitzelung), is an everyday survival strategy, encompassing the habitual avoidance of difficult remembered material.

The endpoint of this microscopic mechanism of repression, the narrator points out, is a moral disconnection marked by a grammatical lapsus in everyday language use: it becomes impossible to connect the first-person pronoun with historical events such as Auschwitz. This empirical shift in language glosses the opening sentence of the novel, which described the rift between past and present symptomatic of this same moral disconnection. Chapter 10 of *Kindheitsmuster* ends with a memory lapse: During the return trip from L, the path of the narrator's quest for the child Nelly, the formal headquarters of the Hitlerjugend, three minutes away from the cafe on the other side of the river has been blocked out of remembrance. Her recognition of the lapse comes through an emotional cue — the keen but undefinable sense of misery she felt at the cafe was a trace of the fear Nelly experienced each time she entered the house. Recognition of the missing house and the "road not taken" and the twinge of emotion mark the distance left to travel before a tentative attempt can be made to speak again in the first person. Without these preliminary gestures of microsurgery to reconnect across the grammatical divide, there can be no reanimation of moral memory for Wolf and her narrator. It is in this place of intimacy between staged and remembered selves that *Vergangenheits-bewältigung* must begin.

Places of Memory: The Threshold of Saying "We"

Both Christa Wolf and Ene Mihkelson make use of fiction as a *lieu de mémoire*, a site where the operations of remembering and reworking the past can be staged. In Mihkelson's three novels, the same shadowy and ironic plot of family history is set in three successive fictional microenvironments, emerging each time as from a bath of photographic fluid with more of the narrative of the postwar years showing. Palimpsestic rewriting also reflects the "accommodation" of the text to three different historical moments with different apertures and degrees of openness. Reflecting on this coinherence of times, the narrator comments: "This Soviet era was really a repetition of several familiar former eras." (AU, 89) However, the most important „lieu de memoire" or theatre of memory in *Ahasveeruse uni* is the archive itself, where the narrator sifts and sorts the raw materials of her family history, and creates her own expanded history book.

Passages in Mihkelson's *Ahasveeruse uni* expose intersections between poorly illuminated lacunae of personal and family history and metanarratives of national history. Splicing gaps, on the one hand within memory and on the other between memory and the written historical record constitutes the "action" of the novel's quest plot, which gains momentum from the 20th chapter onward. The narrator reads her way toward the suppressed chapters of her father's side of the family tree and the tangled, murky history of the Forest Brethren. All of the narrator's descents into the humus of her family's past bump up against inextricable hybridity, including the question of "mixed blood" and negotiated mediation between the world of the Baltic German barons and Estonian peasantry. She reads and glosses documents she finds in the archives, reading the family tree, connecting its strands, and filling in the spaces with explanations: "Grandmother Anna's maternal grandfather was the *vöörmünder* of the county court, later head kohtumees. And her grandfather's line at some point changed its name to Reiter. The *vöörmünder* of the county court was the intermediary between the manor and the peasants, whose task it was to keep track that people with noone to care for them did not starve, that widows and widowers provided inheritance for children from their first marriages — an official permit was required for remarriage..." (93) Taking a reflective distance on this process of making connections, the narrator points out in both spatial

and temporal terms the immediacy and palpability of the signature of the past on the land through the metaphor of superimposed weavings:

> Estonia is a small country. There are both many and few estates. Every time I ask about someone's place of birth, I immediately think of what estate the land once fell under. It is as if I were thinking back through an orderly network, one layer placed upon another, with the knots intertwined among themselves. This interweaving is contained in the landscape, the manors, the farms. The breath of those-who-came-before-use is everywhere. Even the dreams of one person reveal themselves to another, in order that the thought of our forebears would not disappear, from behind and within that surface we call "real circumstances", from the sky and from the air. (96).

"We" is a double signifier in this context, referring to both the kin network and the Estonian people, beyond which a poorly differentiated and contested collective or communal memory comes into view. Mihkelson's narrator focuses in particular on those Estonians in her kin network who stood between the ruling barons and the peasantry in positions where they mediated power and meted out punishment: overseers, oxherders, minor court officials. In passages of more philosophical historiographic reflection, struggles for freedom are measured in the context of this unavoidable hybridity. Oppositional rhetoric of identity in the era of national awakening was heroic but limited; it had the function of catalyzing the consciousness of a national identity; if one looks more closely, the German and Estonian layers of culture are impossible to pull apart.[8].

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[8] As the narrator reflects on the 10-year overlap between her paternal grandfather's childhood and that of Estonian realist author Eduard Vilde, both born on the Muuga manor, she reads Vilde's representations of social inequality in the novella "My First Striped Pants" obliquely: "It is also amusing that the childish quarrel between the sons of the granary servant and (according to the papers) the forester later became under the pen of Vilde an image for social inequality. Even our childhoods are later described according to the retrospective angle of vision. In reality, even in those days there were free folk moving around in the country and the city — skilled workers and officials, educated people of mixed ethnic background and between classes, but during the whirl of the national awakening we needed opposition, which

> It was the fashion to rat on one another. The prank was played and then someone blabbed about it, and a third one went and informed, and the perpetrators called witnesses, and the end of it all was that the district scribe sketched a court record in an elegant hand: It was decided to give Mäe Mart 15 lashes. Just as for a child, except that this was a grown man. Then there was that kind of justice, now there is another way. For fifty years there were no courts and no justice at all. A person's understanding of himself changes, after all. What for one is brutality, for another is a common cold. The Estonian thing is a mixed up thing. Only now did I come to understand this. (90).

Using the device of split subjectivity, the narrator performs rereadings of two canonical works of Estonian literature, Bornhöhe's *Villu võitlused* (1890) and Juhan Liiv's *Vari* (1892), both with protagonists named Villu, and both of which are invested in and informed by the mythology of the struggle for freedom. The critical adult narrator finds the message of Liiv's famous novella is the "baron as beast who beats the clever peasant witless" amusing at best (90):

> For the first time something snapped in me when I read *Villu's Battles.* There is a scene, where another Villu is looking over the corpses of the fallen, and in the moonlight he sees the face of his Estonian friend, the knight Goswin Herice. The Germans fought on one side, the Estonians on the other, but at some point even this was its own kind of fratricidal war. That sentence almost bit me in the eyes, and all I could feel in my heart was pain. We had been wild (metslased) for a long time, but even at the edges of Europe and far in the east one cannot stay in the forest forever. When I looked around me at the estate buildings and the parks, I was both here and there. I did not dare to speak about it, but that was how it was sometimes. Thus when I read about the Estonians' struggle for independence, I fought on my own side against myself. Now

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would allow a conscious coming together of an Estonian people. In Vilde's literary representation, social differences are heightened, a fact that comes home to the narrator based on her microscopic reconstruction of the overlaps in her family history.

> she started laughting, as if the train of thought was ridiculous, even to herself. (91)

A serious look at the hybrid underside of Estonian history yields archetypes of betrayal and fratricide, much more uncomfortable than the struggle for freedom against foreign rule (the Forest Brethren's rallying cry). The narrator disturbs the surface of national mythologies both by pointing to hybridity and by suggesting that traditions of betrayal have bred freely under that surface, informing the interpretation of the most recent avatar of the "ancient struggle for independence," the Forest Brethren.

Christa Wolf's recognition of the vertical dimension of engaging the past is emblematized in *Kindheitsmuster* by the image of travelling into the "tertiary zone", the recent past recast ironically as "prehistoric": As the Du-narrator of the novel suggests, this image was first used by a close friend to denote the psychic rift she sensed between herself and the Nazi era. The image also refers back to the radical alienation from the past articulated in the novel's first sentence. At first the archeological method of recovering and ordering the past seems to be a corrective, or even an alternative to narrative, a choice of documentation over storytelling. The paradox of the metaphor of archeology is that it yields only dead material; it is also an instrumental process, an externalization carried out actively through the writer's conscious agency. The narrator reorients and inflects the archeological metaphor away from aesthetic contemplation of excavation sites by linking the prehistoric tertiary era to internal processes of confronting the past in a sentence fragment that occurs to her during the 1971 trip to her hometown of L.: "Mit einem Auto vom Typ Wartburg ins Tertiär reisen." (142). The journey into the prehistoric era, the "tertiary past," measured along a depth trajectory below the surface of a two-dimensional official version necessarily entails the demanding time-travel of engaging unconscious material. It also demands an associative process of assembling and recombining the recovered pieces of the past into a more tentative and mobile arrangement than that presented by official, consensually accepted and publicly memorialized accounts.

The farther-reaching implications of the apparatus of pronouns in Wolf's novel are threefold: first, the refusal or deferral of writing in the first person is an acknowledgment not only of a split and mutilated subjectivity, but of a radically unreliable memory. As Zahlmann has

pointed out, it is also a way of relaxing inner censorship, facilitating the emergence of unconscious material. Second, in keeping with the initial assumption that alienation from the past is an intentional moral act (even if it takes the form of "passive" consent), the absence of the narrator's child-self is reinterpreted as the result of willful (self)-abandonment. This may or may not be the internalized equivalent, the shadow of parental abandonment, the moral and affective failure of Charlotte Jordan with respect to Nelly. The consequences of the mother-daughter abandonment scenario and the moral self-abdication must be worked out in writing.[9] Through the coordinated or syncopated grammatical procedures of narration, a drama of desire will be enacted, in which the pursuer (Du) is at least as maimed or blinded as the pursued (Nelly.) Finally, assent to the uncanniness of "living in the third person" is an acceptance by the adult narrator of a state of nausea (*Sprach-Ekel*), the bodily correlate of profound psychic ambivalence. In Ene Mihkelson's novels, the fluctuations of blood pressure are the somatic correlates of the deep discomfort of tracking the past.

Vergangenheitsbewältigung for both Ene Mihkelson and Christa Wolf necessarily entails microprocessing memory, the data of one's internalized past, as well as a deliberate, patient inquiry into archival documents that together render an *écriture du passé* between fiction and history. The reader must work his or her way through the high access gates, train the climbing muscles of memory, and, in the case of *Ahasveeruse uni* slip with relief into the more action-laden second part of the novel where the plot resembles a detective narrative, only to find that the quest is without final answers, and the quester must keep on wandering in search of her father's grave. What are the risks of writing a "difficult" novel? While Christa Wolf's *Kindheitsmuster* has become embedded in a formidable archive of secondary criticism, Mihkelson's *Ahasveeruse uni* has met with few brave commentators, and to date has not received a substantial article-length review. How might such novels as *Kindheitsmuster* and *Ahasveeruse uni* tilt public discourse on the past? At the very least, through their complicated

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[9] The gendering of memory on both personal and social levels is an additional aspect of fruitful intertextual readings between Christa Wolf and Ene Mihkelson. Marie-Luise Gaettens has provided a thought-provoking approach to this aspect of Wolf's remembered childhood under National Socialism in Kindheitsmuster, which she reads in contrast with Ruth Rehmann's *Der Mann auf der Kanzel*.

tactical refusals, these texts close off avenues of easy access to the past, providing landmarks toward uncharted territory that both historians and "common readers" must eventually reclaim.

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A Comparative Study of Joy Kogawa's *Obasan* and Ene Mihkelson's *Ahasveeruse uni* in the Light of Trauma Theory

EVA REIN

At first glance the Japanese-Canadian writer Joy Kogawa's *Obasan* (1981) and the Estonian writer Ene Mihkelson's *Ahasveeruse uni* (*The Sleep of Ahasuerus*) (2001) seem to have little in common considering the different historical, political, social and cultural realities that inform the Japanese-Canadian and Estonian experience, not to mention the divergence in some of the main concerns as well as the narrative techniques, structural and stylistic aspects of the novels. However, *Obasan* and *Ahasveeruse uni* share the treatment of the devastation of history on human lives and, more specifically, they deal with the plight of individuals who have survived a social catastrophe which results in trauma. Whether it was the alternating Soviet, German and again Soviet occupations during the Second World War and the Soviet repressions after the Second World War in occupied Estonia or the persecution and repression of Japanese-Canadians during and after the Second World War in Canada — in both cases a part of inhabitants of the respective countries were caught in a succession of unexpected and terrible events beyond their comprehension. A closer analysis of the novels reveals that the relationship between trauma, body and memory, and by extension, the significance of giving one's experiences a narrative form in order to overcome traumatic events is not only a common theme, but some of the respective observations that the Japanese-Canadian and Estonian female protagonists-narrators make and subjective truths they arrive at could be seen as entering into an imaginary dialogue where the thoughts of one protagonist aptly echo those of the other or even elaborate on her

condition. If the Japanese-Canadian woman asked the Estonian one, how to translate the word "uni" in the title of the book she comes from, the Estonian woman would tell her in answer: "the word has several connotations in the novel, one of them being "dream" but what perhaps best renders its multilayered meaning can be found in your own insightful reflection in *Obasan*: 'There are some nightmares from which there is no waking, only deeper and deeper sleep.'"

The protagonists-narrators of Joy Kogawa's *Obasan* and Ene Mihkelson's *Ahasveeruse uni* are the 36-year-old Naomi Nakane and the 54-year-old M. Reiter respectively. The identities of the women are vague and they suffer from various psychological problems stemming from their traumatic experiences in the past, which have deeply affected their personalities as well as their lives. The safe world of both has collapsed when they were four years of age.

Before the protagonist of *Obasan* loses her mother physically, she falls victim to recurrent sexual abuse by a white neighbour Old Man Gower, which separates the daughter from her mother in the child's imagination, as from her perspective there is now a secret between them, which the abuser forbids her to tell her mother: "In my childhood dreams, the mountain yawns apart as the chasm spreads. My mother is on one side of the rift. I am on the other. We cannot reach each other. My legs are being sawn into half" (Kogawa 1994: 77). Soon after, her mother disappears which the child begins to consider her fault, although in fact, she leaves for Japan to take care of her ailing grandmother as was the duty of a traditional Japanese woman. Naomi is told that her mother will return, but this is never to happen due to the Second World War and its consequences. As a result of the 1941 Pearl Harbor events, the Canadian authorities develop a paranoia that the Japanese-Canadians would become collaborationists and disloyal citizens, and the internment of the whole community begins. Like other men, the protagonist's father is separated from the family and sent to a road-construction camp which ruins his health and he dies. Naomi and her brother Stephen with Aunt Obasan and Uncle Isamu, who become foster parents for the children, are deported. However, what appears to be most excruciating for the protagonist is lack of contact with her mother and knowledge about her mother's fate as well as the grief it causes:

> /.../ my late childhood growing-up days, are sleepwalk years, a time of half dream. /.../
>
> The sadness and the absence are like a long winter storm, the snow falling in an unrelieved colorlessness that settles and freezes, burying me beneath a growing monochromatic weight. Something dead is happening, like the weeds that are left to bleach and wither in the sun. (Kogawa 1994: 239–240)

The family of the protagonist of *Ahasveeruse uni* is forced to leave home in the fear of raids and the subsequent 1949 deportations organised by the NKVD to purge the Soviet Union of "political offenders". Subsequently, she is left behind by her parents who become "forest brothers" or anti-Soviet partisans. As a result of the harrowing experiences the child falls ill with somnolence:

> Somnolence began from behind the wardrobe where she remained after her parents went to the forest, but she never recalled the wardrobe that offered shelter from public sight and the bunk when she was awake. She never recalled the torn blankets, the sheets soaked with sweat, parched dark grey, into which her legs scurrying at nights had rubbed holes — she kept escaping, each night she was escaping and her legs were moving and her body was swaying in the rhythm of running from one edge of the bunk to the other —, because she still remembered the scent of cleanliness of the white sheets of her childhood home.[1] (Mihkelson 2001: 25)

In the examples quoted above Naomi's sense of being "buried /.../ beneath /.../ weight" and the imagery of death, and the opposition between asleep/awake in *Ahasveeruse uni* imply traumatic memory which has developed alongside narrative memory as a result of traumatic experiences; Naomi's sleepwalking, M. Reiter's somnolence, and their repeated nightmares/dreams as well as instances of being half-asleep/half-awake continuing all trough their later lives refer to the post-traumatic stress disorder.

Cathy Caruth (1995: 4) defines the post-traumatic stress disorder as follows:

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[1] All the translations from Ene Mihkelson's *Ahasveeruse uni* appearing in the present article are mine — E. R.

> there is a response, sometimes delayed, to an overwhelming event or events, which takes the form of repeated, intrusive hallucinations, dreams, thoughts or behaviours stemming from the event, along with numbing that may have begun during or after the experience and possibly also increased arousal to (and avoidance of) stimuli recalling the event.

The thought of the protagonist of *Ahasveeruse uni* that "Sleep is sapping my vigour and indicates something that human nature cannot understand at all" (2001: 444), suggests that she has not been able to work through certain experiences for a long time, which is a big burden to her, and that in her opinion, it is not possible altogether to have access to them. The protagonist of *Obasan* has similar feelings: "There are some nightmares from which there is no waking, only deeper and deeper sleep" (Kogawa 1994: 232). An inability to interpret shattering experiences and overcome them is connected with the pathology of the post-traumatic stress disorder as described above, which in the opinion of Cathy Caruth can be explained by the structural specificity of experiencing a traumatic event — "the event is not assimilated or experienced fully at the time, but only belatedly, in its repeated *possession* of the one who experiences it. To be traumatized is precisely to be possessed by an image or event" (1995: 4–5, italics original), whereas significantly, the real effect of the traumatic event is expressed "in the collapse of its understanding" (ib. 7). In other words, a traumatic experience is characterised by a crisis of experiencing it.

As a cause of the crisis of experiencing, Bessel A. van der Kolk and Onno van der Hart, departing from Pierre Janet's treatment of dissociation, have pointed out that traumatic memory is radically different from the automatic synthesis of new information and narrative memory, in the course of which experience is processed by bringing it into consciousness and in which affective and cognitive aspects associated with the experience are involved — in extreme circumstances the functioning of narrative memory is seriously impeded, because the existing meaning systems are unable to receive this experience (1991: 425–427). A situation or an event causes a trauma in the first place if an individual experiences his/her inability to have an influence on what is happening (ib. 446) which in its turn leads to the fixation of the inability to act in the individual and which

begins to manifest itself in compulsive behaviour (ib. 427–431). In psychotherapy an individual is helped to give his/her traumatic memory a linguistic expression and narrative form, whereas in the process of integrating the traumatic experience into consciousness and narrative memory, the therapeutic influence of narrating (ib. 431–446) lies primarily in the fact that, unlike traumatic memory which does not have a social component, narrative memory is a social act (ib. 431), thus offering a certain counterbalance to the inability to act that possessed the individual at the time the traumatic event occurred (ib. 446).

Ahasveeruse uni depicts in a most expressive manner the sufferings of a person in the grasp of traumatic memory. While the events that have been stored in narrative memory can be talked about, what has been accumulated in traumatic memory cannot be put into words. This is, for example, expressed in the despair of the protagonist when she is looking at the photos:

> I m e e t d i f f e r e n t o p t i o n s whose lifelines have been severed, and when I am sometimes crossing borders in a dream, my grief becomes so bitter that this torture cannot be described by any human means of expression.
>
> A violent death throws times into confusion, she said almost in a whisper. DYING IS ART, killing is not. My father was killed and the explosion of torturous energy still keeps coming in waves. I am floating on the surface of the sea of violence like a cork and asking for mercy in vain. (Mihkelson 2001: 461–462)

In a similar way the protagonist of *Obasan* describes the exhausting and backbreaking toil in the sugar-beet fields of the Canadian Prairies:

> I cannot bear the memory. /.../ There is a word for it. Hardship. The hardship is so pervasive, so inescapable, so thorough it's a noose around my chest and I cannot move anymore. All the oil in my joints has drained out and mud is in my bone marrow. I can't move anymore. My fingernails are black from scratching the scorching day and there is no escape. (Kogawa 1994: 232)

The influence of the traumas caused by social catastrophes on both protagonists has become permanent and this is not only because as infants, they lose their homes and both parents — the father of the

protagonist of *Ahasveeruse uni* perishes in unclear circumstances in the forest, the connection with her mother remains fragile and complicated for her whole of her life, the mother of the protagonist of *Obasan* does not return from Japan, and her father falls ill soon after being deported and dies — and she herself goes through the hell of internment camps, but because neither of the protagonists has been able to share or work through their traumatic experiences. Rather, the problems have been aggravated especially due to many unanswered questions, such as who was the father of the protagonist of *Ahasveeruse uni* and what exactly happened to him after all and what kind of person is her mother Vilma, and what happened to the mother of the protagonist of *Obasan* in Japan and whether she is alive or perhaps even dead.

Both in *Obasan* and *Ahasveeruse uni* the sufferings of the protagonists' bodies are central. From the point of view of trauma theory, the overwhelming physicality of the experience of the two women stems from the abovementioned specificity of traumatic memory, according to which, instead of being brought into the consciousness, a traumatic event is stored in the body and begins to express itself through it (see, for example, Robson 2004). Post-traumatic stress disorder caused by extreme events thus manifests itself besides the minds of the protagonists also in their bodies, when we take into account various ailments and diseases of the protagonist of *Ahasveeruse uni*, and the numbness of the tortured body of the protagonist of *Obasan*, signalled also by abundant images of dismemberment in her dreams/nightmares. Because traumatic memory is more connected with body than narrative memory, it functions by manifesting itself in bodily sensations, as a certain body-memory. The expression of traumatic body-memory can be observed in the following examples from the novels under discussion: the first refers to Naomi's suffering that results from her inability to communicate with her mother after her departure which renders her daughter being psychically and physically cured impossible:

> The tree is a dead tree in the middle of the prairies. I sit on its roots still as a stone. In my dreams, a small child sits with a wound on her knee. The wound on her knee is on the back of her skull, large and moist. A double wound. The child is forever unable to speak. The child forever fears to tell. I apply a thick bandage but nothing

> can soak up the seepage. I beg that the woundedness may be healed and that the limbs may learn to dance. But you stay in a black-and-white photograph, smiling your yasashi smile. (Kogawa 1994: 291)

The second example is from *Ahasveeruse uni* where its beginning serves as an illustration of traumatic memory, the middle part expands on the issue of memory to include traumatic body-memory, and the last two sentences of the quotation point to both psychosomatic illnesses and organic diseases caused by unresolved traumatic experiences:

> Now it begins again ... this multiple existence, round-the-clock alternation of reality and dream, where I cannot be very sure of the light and shadow and the seasons. S h e t a l k s a b o u t m e a s h e r s e l f a n d I t a l k a b o u t h e r, b e c a u s e I s e e h e r, o n o n e o c c a s i o n, i n s i d e m y s e l f a n d t h e n c o m p l e t e l y — c o m p l e t e l y f r o m t h e o u t s i d e. I name the years, newspapers and events, she talks about a sleep that lasts. We are stuck in our bodies or in the time, whose story reveals itself in the middle of a space flung into the landscape... Because the connections between the accidental events appear only later, each moment becomes a final one, every loss, every fear grows as large as the world. And if diseases befall you then, you will find a secular god, who is called J. or a doctor. From that moment onwards you cannot defend yourself against the ghosts stemming from your body. (Mihkelson 2001: 23)

When the other aunt of the protagonist of *Obasan* tries yet again to make her speak about the past, Naomi replies: "I cannot tell about this time, Aunt Emily. The body will not tell" (Kogawa 1994: 235). After being operated on for a number of times the protagonist of *Ahasveeruse uni* says that "SHE DOES NOT KNOW WHAT SECRETS HER BODY HIDES. Why else is she being cut with such perseverance and so mercilessly" (Mihkelson 2001: 112). From the point of view of trauma theory both examples can be interpreted as eloquent references to the close relationship between traumatic memory and body as well as to experienced events that cannot be either assimilated into consciousness or made heard, all the more that an individual may have completely forgotten the trauma — it can only be felt in the body.

When the lives of the protagonists of *Obasan* and *Ahasveeruse uni* are thrown into chaos, they are infants whose understanding of the ongoing events is inevitably very limited; also, because of the extreme character of the occurring events, the cognitive processing of the experiences and storing them in narrative memory is seriously impeded. Therefore, their capacity to understand what is happening as well as the possibilities open for them to overcome shocking experiences depend on the surrounding adults. The ability, readiness and will of the relatives to deal with the past and the present as well as to discuss these with the protagonists becomes vital especially in the later search for identity of the two women.

The protagonist of *Obasan* has been trying in vain to learn something about her mother from her Aunt Obasan, who is a stepmother for her: "The greater my urgency to know, the thicker her silences have always been. No prodding will elicit clues" (Kogawa 1994: 55). Also Aunt Emily, who is a typical modern North-American woman and active spokesperson for the rights of the Japanese-Canadians, and who finds that everything should be spoken about, behaves exactly in the same way as Aunt Obasan and other silent relatives who cherish traditional Japanese values when it comes to the fate of Naomi's mother and grandmother who left for Japan together with the protagonist's mother: "Nomi, I've told you all I can about them" (Kogawa 1994: 222), without having actually told anything relevant to the protagonist. It is revealed only towards the end of the novel that the mother has asked all the relatives to spare Naomi and Stephen from the terrible knowledge of her sufferings.

A reason why the protagonist of *Ahasveeruse uni* is denied information about her parents is to save her from the possible Soviet repressions: "It is better if you do not know what happened to your father, it is better if you do not know what happened to you parents, then it is not possible to elicit anything from you even in the case of coercive interrogation" (Mihkelson 2001: 107). Indeed, knowing and remembering can be dangerous and become even fatal in certain historical and political conditions, especially in the situation of interrogation and thus the above claim can be seen as well substantiated in its time. As the two last examples have indicated, the event that both protagonists are not being given any information about

their absent parents, for different reasons, though, can be seen as protective silence on the part of their relatives.[2]

Another statement that the protagonist of *Ahasveeruse uni* frequently hears from her relatives, irrespective of whether it is still the time of Soviet occupation or the time when the Estonian independence has already been restored, and possibly, partly due to their re-evaluation of the past events and choices that the change of times has caused, is as follows: "What are you badgering us with questions; what is the importance of how things once were, nothing can be changed. Everything is over and what is over, should disappear from the mind, this is what I was told" (Mihkelson 2001: 32). Thus, when she questions the people who could explain to her the background of the events that have taken place, the protagonist faces denial, silencing and a wish to forget, as well as a suggestion that she should not show any interest in the past, which is summarised in the following example from the novel: "But there is such a thing with the past that if you do not know anything, it is better if you keep away from what has been forgotten" (ib. 29). When the protagonist realises once again how little she knows about her father and Estonian history, she realises the following: "I have been really helped to live past myself. Silence around me is perfect" (ib. 334). Also the protagonist of *Obasan*, whose most burning question about her mother is not answered for decades, and whom Aunt Emily provides with a package of papers that raise new questions which are left unanswered, she ponders: "I can escape from the question into the papers, I can escape from the papers into the question, back and forth like a hamster in a cage that hasn't been cleaned for months" (Kogawa 1994: 219).

If viewed from the perspective of trauma theory, the silence of the protagonists' relatives can be explained by their being traumatised themselves. For example, in addition to the culture-specific reasons for the silence of Aunt Obasan, her silence seems to be pointing to her suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder: "The language of her grief is silence: She has learned it well, its idioms, its nuances. Over the years, silence within her small body has grown large and powerful …

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[2] For a further discussion of the complex and multilayered notion of silence in Joy Kogawa's *Obasan*, which stems from the specificities of Japanese culture, see: Rein, E. 1999. Eloquent Silence in Joy Kogawa's *Obasan*. — *Essays in Canadian Literature and Society*. Ed. By E. Rein. Tartu: Tartu University Press, pp. 67–77.

My brother will be of little help. Stephen, unable to bear the density of her inner retreat and the rebuke he felt in her silences, fled to the ends of the earth" (Kogawa 1994: 27). In the case of Vilma, the mother of the protagonist of *Ahasveeruse uni*, the post-traumatic stress disorder manifests itself in the event that "after coming out of the forest she had been seeing the captors and raids in her dreams each night for twenty years. When I woke up, I never understood where exactly I was, very slowly I became aware that I was in my own home and bed, and the years of being a forest brother had been over for a long time" (Mihkelson 2001: 432).

The relationships between trauma, body and memory as well as the reasons for the identity crises of the protagonists of *Obasan* and *Ahasveeruse uni* become clearer when a metapsychological theory of the phantom, as described by Esther Rashkin, is applied to the analysis of the novels. According to Rashkin, the phantom is a "psychic constellation that can be produced in response to specific private, intrafamilial traumas, but that can also manifest itself in response to forms of public trauma associated with societal or group persecution" (1999: 434). Phantom theory was developed by Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok when they studied the psychopathology that results from hiding and silencing shameful events (ib. 435). They discovered that the pathology of patients is not necessarily a sign of the surfacing of the experience that the patients themselves have suppressed, and they described a mechanism according to which an individual, who is usually a parent, transmits a traumatic or shameful event that he keeps secret, in silence directly into the unconscious of his child through cryptic language and behaviour (ib.). Such transgenerational handing down of traumatic or shameful events from one generation to another can include also several successive generations or take place over a generation, that is, from a grandparent to a grandchild (ib. 436); also, traumatic events can be transmitted by a person who has in the status of a family member, for example, a guardian of the child (ib. 451). According to Esther Rashkin,

> The child haunted by a phantom becomes a living tomb or repository in which an unspeakable drama, experienced as traumatic by someone else, lies buried yet alive, exerting its disruptive influence in a potentially infinite number of ways on the existence of the child or on the child grown to adulthood. The silence or gap in the

> speech of someone else "speaks," as would a ventriloquist, through the words and acts of the child. (ib. 436)

The situation of a child haunted by a phantom is made more complicated by the event that in addition to the unexplainable secret, he inherits also a wordless obligation to hide it and suppress any desire to learn about or understand the reason for the secret, in order to retain the impeccable reputation of the parent and the family (ib. 446). In their behaviour the relatives of the protagonist of *Obasan* adhere to traditional Japanese cultural norms, according to which difficulties have to be endured in silence, because complaining about hardships is considered extremely shameful as it leads to falling into disgrace — "losing face." Also, Naomi's relatives honour the wish of her mother, who was badly disfigured in the 1945 Nagasaki atomic bombing in Japan, not to tell her children about it as well as her decision to never return to Canada as she had found she was no longer suitable for the role of a mother. The protagonist recalls a day from her childhood when the grownups discussed something among themselves. Although Naomi is not involved in the conversation in any way, she nevertheless senses the tense atmosphere which is left lingering for decades. Naomi remembers that all through her life the adults have whispered: "Kodomo no tame. For the sake of the children" (Kogawa 1994: 26). The answers to her questions have been only evasive. Even as an adult, she is considered too young to be told about her mother's story: "'Too young,' he [the Uncle — E. R.] said softly. 'Still too young. … Someday'" (Kogawa 1994: 3–4). Consequently, through her request to hide her disfigurement, which she considers shameful, from her children, Naomi inherits the secret of her mother she is actually unaware of and according to Rashkin, such a child "cannot become a direct conduit of the parent's silenced affect [but] she can only act it out in a distorted, incongruous, or camouflaged manner" (1999: 448).

In *Ahasveeruse uni* there is an eloquent dialogue between the protagonist and her mother Vilma, concerning the father Meinhard of the protagonist, which also bears the sign of the parent hiding something: "Then Vilma had become spirited again — the pause of silence had made her spirited — and she had said, with a threat in her voice: Meinhard respected me very much, we were wed in the church, Meinhard would not like it at all that you torture me so with your questioning" (Mihkelson 2001: 269). In the last example, the traumatised mother who is suffering from the sense of shame and guilt

that have not been worked through, transmits her trauma to her daughter, partly by silencing and hiding the events concerning the father, partly also by accusing her daughter of asking questions, and perhaps, herself completely unaware of this, by manipulating skilfully with the feelings of the daughter about her dead father. The daughter resists such behaviour as follows: "...after the pause ... she had asked, whether Meinhard had forbidden her to tell about him to her only child, whether he had told her to deny his existence, whether this had been the point of their wedding ..." (ib. 269). It can be argued that the protagonists of both novels are doubly traumatised — alongside with their own traumatic experiences they have inherited also the traumas of their parents.

From the point of view of trauma theory there is only one possibility for the protagonists of both novels to work through the shattering events — the experience encoded in the traumatic memory has to be put into words. The realisation of this is expressed in the thought of the protagonist of *Ahasveeruse uni*: "MEMORY IS, IN THE FIRST PLACE, A FEELING, which becomes aware of itself only through naming" (ib. 454). Limit events that could not be experienced, can now be integrated into consciousness through verbal expression, in other words — they move form traumatic memory into narrative memory.

Regardless of some differences in the narrative techniques employed in *Obasan* and *Ahasveeruse uni*, both novels depict the emergence of narrative from the close relationship between trauma, body and memory as well as emphasise the fundamental significance of the creation of narrative as an important part in working through trauma. As opposed to the inability to act in a traumatic situation, the narrative act enables both protagonists at least partly to regain control over their lives that was lost during the traumatic events. Narrating also allows it to reinterpret the past and give meaning to it. And, last but not least, narrating is also a way of exploring and constructing one's identity in both novels.

In conclusion, it could be said that in the course of a comparative study of *Obasan* and *Ahasveeruse uni* in the framework of trauma theory the various differences between the novels mentioned at the beginning of the discussion have lost their prominence and several important commonalities have crystallised. The analysis of above examples from both texts indicates that as far as trauma, its impact on

people and their difficulties in dealing with the aftermath of trauma are concerned, a social catastrophe leaves wounds into their souls and bodies which heal very slowly and may scar them forever.

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Shifting Sands of Existential Self-Captivity: Buddhist and Confucian Solutions in Abe's *Woman in the Dunes*

DAVID JONES

> "Perhaps what he had been seeing up until now was not the sand but grains of sand."
>
> *Full Name:* Niki Jumpei. *Age:* thirty-one. *Height*: five feet five inches. *Weight:* a hundred and forty pounds. *Hair:* slightly thin, worn straight back; no hair oil. *Eyesight:* right 20/30; left, 20/20. *Color of Skin:* darkish. *Feature:* long face, a slight cast to the eyes, snub nose, square jaws; no other special characteristics except for a conspicuous mole under the left ear. *Blood type* AB. Speaks thickly with a stammer. Introverted, stubborn, but not especially inept socially. *Clothing:* Perhaps dressed for entomological work.

The Kafkaesque genre of Abe Kobo's *Woman in the Dunes* is noticeable immediately to Western readers. But unlike the characters in Kafka's novels who never seem to learn the nature of their crimes or find their ways into the castle, Abe's missing person, Niki Jumpei, finds himself in his absence, is liberated in his captivity, and discovers meaning in the absurdity of his existential situation. Niki Jumpei, like Kafka's Joseph K. in *The Trial*, is conscientious and hard working; he is a schoolteacher who might be married, or not. His material status is somewhat ambiguous, just as his life. And like Joseph K., he finds himself being held captive in the most absurd of conditions — he is

being held in an inescapable pit where he is conscripted to shovel sand and live in tight quarters with a younger widowed woman. However Niki's situation emanates from more Japanese concerns of family, culture, and community. Niki too will deal with and come to terms with the machinery of the law and its deaf ear to inaudible cries for individual justice, but Abe will not subject him to the impersonal humiliation of a legal system that will have him searching for an inaccessible acquittal from the unknown crime of simply being human. Kafka's characters such as Joseph K. in both *The Trial* and *The Castle* are mere functions of the human potential Kafka saw as being possible. But this realization of potential for Kafka's characters can only be achieved in spite of the Other, or in confrontation with the otherness of society and its inhuman laws that are capable of charging innocent people with unspecified crimes. In *The Trial*, Joseph K. appeals to his intermediaries in the process of trying to learn of his crime and to be a responsible citizen, but he ends up even more bewildered than when he started. Even (or even especially so) the priest tells him the more he protests the guiltier he appears. In the end, there is no reconciliation, only the author's affirmation of the human impotence in the face of the otherness of a world that simply does not care. We will all be executed in one way or the other in this evil world of isolation and alienation where there can be no redemption or solace. Although Joseph K. is less victimized in *The Castle*, we can hardly find any hope in the darkness of his plight as he attempts to reach the promised land of the castle's interior.[1] All his strategies to enter fail. Through his powerless characters, Kafka conducts his desperate search for meaning and belonging in an indifferent world. His focus was always an inward reflection on the individual and what he might do, although he would always be unsuccessful, to find the self-worth and *raison d'être* that drove him. Kafka is the perfect voice for the anxiety, alienation, and isolation of the self in the 20th-century world. Abe Kobo adds an interesting twist, and Japanese resolution, however, to this more pessimistic view.

Suna no Onna or *The Woman in the Dunes* opens with the disappearance of Niki Jumpei, a typical schoolteacher who works at a nondescript job in some nondescript school, or at least so it seems

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[1] Almost all the scenes in *The Castle* are in the dark, which is the way Teshigahara chose to shoot the film version of the *Woman in the Dunes*.

because Abe leaves the status of this fact vague. Niki in some sense is meant to represent everybody. He is off on holiday, a day's ride on the train to the seashore. He is average, about as average as we all can get. And like all of us, Niki harbors a secret passion that he feeds to his shadow side. Abe informs the reader of Niki's emblematic mediocrity in the third paragraph: "In the case of this man, the clues were negligible" (3). His destination was known — there is no mystery involved here — and "by its very nature, it was inconceivable that his work involved some secret for which he might have been abducted" (4). And that "his normal behavior had not given the slightest hint . . . he intended to vanish" (4). "Of course, missing persons are not really uncommon . . .. Many disappearances, for example, may be described as simple escape" (3). Is Niki Jumpei, this schoolteacher living a very normal life, simply trying to escape the humdrum reality of life in some anonymous Japanese city? He's gone for seven years, "without anyone learning the truth" (6) and is pronounced dead "in compliance with Section 30 of the civil code" (6). The truth of Niki's escape is given its presence in his captivity and his truth will be the hope of human freedom. Niki's solution to his existential dilemma will be a fundamentally and uniquely Japanese resolution to the meaning of life. This resolution takes form in the meaning of what constitutes a self, a self that reflects the shifting sands of its captivity by the woman in the dunes.

Abe quickly provides a premonition that foreshadows poor Niki's later captivity: "Naturally, everyone at first imagined that a woman was involved. But his wife, or at least the woman he lived with, announced that the object of his trip had been to collect insect specimens" (4). Niki is not visiting another city to keep an appointment with a lover; his three-day holiday is not a trysting match of fulfilling self-indulgent hedonistic desires; he's seeking exoskeletal discoveries, not the endoskeletal delights of a woman's flesh. Niki Jumpei, this normal everyday schoolteacher — maybe married, or maybe living with a woman we are told is another vague detail consciously brought to the reader's attention — is an entomologist in search of the *Cicindela japanica* Motschulsky, or "letter-bearer," that "[has] graceful features, but actually [has] sharp jaws and are ferocious and cannibalistic by nature" (12). This particular beetle, as do other beetles, prompts Niki's interest in sand because sand is their habitat where a "single beetle will cordon off an area of as much as

one square mile" (16). Niki's cordoned off area will be far less, however. In fact, our entomologist later discovers "he had been lured by the beetle into a desert from which there was no escape — like some famished mouse" (50).

Insect and animal references abound in the book. Niki's motivation is to become like other lucky entomologists who have discovered a new type: "the discoverer's name appears in the illustrated encyclopedias of entomology appended to the technical Latin name of the newly found insect; and there, perhaps, it is preserved for something less than eternity. His efforts are crowned with success if his name is perpetuated in the memory of his fellow men by being associated with an insect" (10). This apparently unassuming schoolteacher is furtively driven at some level by his ego, but Niki's real discovery may bring him something greater that the eternity of having a bug named after him. This eternity, however, will be anonymous to all, except to his community and the nameless and nearly faceless woman in the dunes.

Awakening after his first night in the house in the sand pit to realize that the rope ladder which represented the only way out of (or into) the woman's house had been removed by the villagers, his trip's specific purpose is made clear: "there are a lot of coleoptera [any insect characterized by forewings modified to form tough protective covers for the hind wings, including the beetles and weevils] hopping around in sandy soil like this. I wonder if you know of any. I wanted to find a new specimen on this vacation" (58). Poor Jumpei gets no reply from the woman in the dunes except her faintly moving lips that don't seem to mouth any words. This is her same silent reply to his request to contact the villagers who brought him to this desolate location for overnight lodging. "What's the matter with you? Damn it! Why don't you say anything? . . . This silence of yours is the worst thing. My pupils are always doing that, but I tell them that the most cowardly thing they can do is clam up and pretend to take the blame themselves. If there's any explanation, out with it at once." And in "a surprisingly firm voice she said: 'I think you already understand'" (58). Like an insect caught in a black widow's web, Niki Jumpei's is snared by his passion for beetles, their habitat of sand, and now by the woman in the dunes who lives much like the insects he hunts.

The woman in the dunes is a widow who lives in a rickety wooden house that is rotting from the dampness of sand at the bottom of a

deep sandpit. Her village neighbors, who live in pits as well, have brought guests to her house before. Jumpei accepts overnight shelter from this woman and soon discovers the continual shifting sands of the massive dunes surrounding the village are frequently crashing down upon the house as if they were waves of a vast sea pounding against the shore. The massive dunes also threaten to bury the entire community that follows the same motto as the woman to "Love Your Home'' (37). Earlier, before arriving in the woman's sand cavity of a home, "this image of the flowing sand made an indescribably exciting impact on the man. The barrenness of sand . . . was not caused by simple dryness, but apparently was due to the ceaseless movement that made it inhospitable to all living things" (14). Jumpei is conscripted to help shovel the eternally descending sand so that the woman's life in the community can continue in the same humdrum way it always has. Perhaps his assistance will lighten the total burden of the weight of descending sand. There is no way out, even for a man who protests that he is "no tramp — unfortunately for you [he tells the woman when he awakes to no exit]. I pay my taxes, and I'm a registered resident. There'll soon be a request out for an investigation, and then you'll see" (60). Jumpei's faith in the system as his protector against the vicissitudes of life is a common response; it is the false human hope that we somehow matter and that our world is an orderly and human friendly one; this hope is that society and its laws will protect each of us from each other and from nature's forces, especially if we perform our civic duties with diligence and responsibility and obey society's laws. For Niki Jumpei, this hope extends itself even as far as the outcast land of the *Burakumin*.[2] Ultimately, it is a function

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[2] The term *Burakumin* refers to a social group that has suffered long-term discrimination in Japan. The word literally means something like "people of the hamlet." The origins of this group are rather uncertain; in the Edo period they took work nobody else wanted, especially leather-work, which was considered lowly because of dealing with animal carcasses, and other forms of day labor including executions, which is obviously "dirty" work. Even today, *burakumin* remain disadvantaged because poor living conditions and lack of education contribute to their endless cycle of social vulnerability. In Abe's *Woman in the Dunes*, the community Jumpei stumbles upon is comprised of day laborers who stretch their only resource, sand, by selling an inferior cement made from their abundant resource in order to make ends meet. Discrimination against the *Burakumin* in Japanese society was always

of his ego that leads Jumpei, and us, to think that either society, nature, or God really cares about our individual existences. Jumpei has done all of the right things: he works, pays taxes, is a registered resident, and even belongs to a teachers' union. Surely someone will come to this missing person's rescue — if not sooner, then later; if not later, then eventually.

But no one comes, and Niki Jumpei's "blood begins to rot" just like the house that imprisons him from the moisture of the sand. Later, he even learns from the woman to shovel at night because its dampness makes its consistency more manageable. He soon feels that his mind too, from its lack of stimulation, is becoming porous just like the wood being eaten by what the woman calls a wood-borer, but which he insists must be a termite (26). Of course, this wood-borer is the namesake of his ego for which he originally was searching. But in the end, this beetle will mean very little and be superseded by something more vital and profound. But this insight will come only after his mindless meditation of shoveling sand — the meditation that ultimately leads to his realization of hope and being able to develop "the love you have for where you live" (38).

Abe describes the woman herself in various passages as being like a beetle: "As though challenged, she turned abruptly and hurried off. She apparently intended to return to the base of the cliff and continue her work. Quite like the behavior of the beetle, he thought" (38). "She looked like some kind of insect, he thought" (63). But in just two pages later, we begin to sense that this insect-like woman in the dunes will be the "beetle" he has been searching for all along: "Well, apparently she had not yet turned into an insect" (65).[3] Jumpei will eventually realize that this human woman has mutated to meet the challenges of her surroundings, which are, for most, appearances stripped of any humanity. After spending several nights with the relentless cascading sand weighing heavily on the house, Jumpei wonders, much like Joseph K., about his plight.

> First of all, there was no point at all in doing what they had done to him. He was not a horse or a cow; they could not force him to work against his will. Since he

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much more subtle than say the Indian caste system; this makes it even perhaps more insidious and difficult to rectify.

[3] See pages 54 and 67 for more animal-like references.

> was useless as manpower, there was no sense in shutting him up within these walls of sand. It simply inflicted a dependent on the woman. (51)

With its weight of moisture bearing down upon him and having the very foundation of reality shaken as its ground gives way to the groundless, Jumpei faces the reality of sand for the first time. But the experience of the groundless, the *Abgrund* of German philosophy that influenced much of modern Japanese philosophy, is the necessary encounter with the abyss for psychological breakthrough. Once there is no longer any *terra firma* of sense, or reality, the prerequisite condition for self-transformation is present. This experience of the groundless is the point where and when one loses capacity to breathe — to be shut down from the soul's breath of Homer, and to be choked off from the animating life force that flows through all things. This choking off experience is the *Angst* experience and Abe brings his tragic character to this psychological location very early in the book through the metaphor of shifting sand, of heavy moist sand in endless need of nightly shoveling and removal. Abe invokes poor Sisyphus, especially to his intended western readers, and Jumpei will need to imagine Sisyphus happy because Sisyphus' happiness will be his own. He discovers this happiness through his relationship with this beetle-like woman and her oddly convened community that love the wretchedness of their seemingly insect and animal-like existences.

Abe's Niki Jumpei chokes both literally and psychologically. The word *Angst* is from the Greek *angcho* and means to choke. Jumpei "without raising his voice . . . began to groan. He tried to swallow the saliva that had gathered in his mouth, but it stuck in his throat and he gagged. The mucous lining of his throat had become hypersensitive to the presence of sand . . . . He tried to dislodge it, . . . but there was no end to it" (53). This literal choking is also given expression in the psychological: "Looking at the sand wall that encircled him as if to strangle him, he was unpleasantly reminded of his miserable failure to scale it. A feeling of impotence paralyzed his whole body" (51). The sand, which initially represented escape for the man, has now come to suffocate him of soul and render him paralyzed. This same sand, however, for the woman continually represents her community and "love for her home." Sand is her involvement with life, not an escape from life or a loss of freedom. The sand and its reality principle strikes Niki at the end of Part I when the violent flow of sand hits his chest

and knocks him breathless until he has no sense of direction "as he lay doubled up in the black swatch of his vomit" (71). The woman in the dunes has learned to accept the sand and its flow. She has learned to "love her home." But as the story progresses, these shifting sands are nothing but the ground of Niki Jumpei's groundless fears of life, death, and the ever continual flux and insubstantiality of all that is.

Buddhism, just as most of the Greek myth and German philosophy references suggested by Abe, is never directly referenced or alluded to throughout *Woman in the Dunes*, but is ever presently being invoked. Niki is vividly encountering, perhaps for the first time in his life, the power and the weight of the insubstantiality of all things. His secure job, passion for the elusive beetle that will make him immortal, and even the self definition these things give him as a "registered resident," "union member" and "tax payer" are all brought into the clearing of recognition for the first time in his life. The conventionalized truths of Japanese culture and society are underwritten by something much more. The Buddhist doctrine of *anicca* would make its way into the Japanese psyche, become part of its aesthetic that runs as deeply as the undercurrent of the Japanese sense of beauty that renders middle-age salary men to tears when viewing a cherry blossom falling.[4] The shifting sands of impermanence encountered by Jumpei are at face value less beautiful than floating cherry blossoms in a pond, but he comes to realize even this beauty so exquisitely portrayed in Teshigahara's film version. This beauty will come to be

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[4] The *annica* (impermanence) doctrine of Buddhism resonates with other important doctrines such as the *anatta* (no-self) and *paticca-samuppada* (interdependent arising). Discussion on *annica* is found throughout Buddhist teachings such as in the early sources of the *Vinaya Pitaka*, i. 6; *Samyutta-nikaya*, iii. 66 and 106; and the *Digha-nikaya*, ii. 198. The *Majjhima-nikaya* perhaps expresses best the centrality of Buddhist impermanence and interconnectedness of all things in the Buddha's discussion of the no-self: "I have taught you, O bhikkhus [monks], to see conditionality everywhere in all things." For an excellent and very accessible discussion of Indian Buddhism see Walpola Rahula, *What the Buddha Taught*, New York: Grove Press (1959) where the above is from (66). The goal of all schools of Buddhism is to alleviate suffering, conflict, and uneasiness and/or unsatisfactoriness with living and dying, (*dukkha*). This is Niki Jumpei's challenge as well; he resolves the anonymity of his meaningless life by addressing his suffering by finding human community with societal outcasts and surrendering his attachment to a self.

the beauty of his giving up his sense of self to the community amidst the flowing sands, and his offering of himself to the woman in the dunes will be his submission to the shifting sands of reality.

The Buddhist doctrine of impermanence is actually underwritten by a more fundamental sense of how everything comes to be and how everything in being is conditioned by something else. There is no substantial reality in this view. Everything in existence is a continuous flowing flux of insubstantial entities that have emerged from their interactions and are part of the flow itself. Even the self, which is the cause of Jumpei's anxiety, is only a momentary holding-on-to that must be let go so he may respond more appropriately to the context of his throwness. Just as Jumpei is "thrown" into the woman's pit and imprisoned, so are we all thrown into the tide of existence. All of our lives are characterized by this same throwness — we don't ask to be born, cannot choose parents, or even choose our sense of place until adulthood and sometimes not even then. Just as the *Bhagavad Gita*'s Arjuna, Niki Jumpei is every man and every woman.[5] Niki is you, and he is me. But unlike Arjuna, Niki's identity is found only when he loses it, only when he finds "Hope" for the community, in his situation, his context, and the woman he has been thrown into. He first penetrates her physical reality, which results in an abnormal pregnancy. Then, as she is being lifted from her sandpit home for medical attention, in her absence he penetrates her reality as spirit, and

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[5] The *Bhagavad Gita*, "The Song of the Supreme, God, or Great One," is a portion of the *Mahabharata*, an Indian classic that provides instruction for living the good life within the context of social and political struggle. Arjuna, the main character, is faced with the moral dilemma of regaining his rightful kingdom, but in order to do so, he needs to fight and kill his relatives. Krishna, the concrete form of both Vishnu and Brahman, instructs Arjuna how to overcome his dilemma and fulfill his duty with the appropriate moral attitude. Life is a battlefield and the human quest for meaning a challenge. For a good and accessible discussion on the *Bhagavad Gita*, see John M. Koller's *Oriental Philosophies*, 39–50, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons (1985). Eknath Easwaran's translation of the *Bhagavad Gita*, New York: Vintage Books (1985) is quite accessible and readable. Niki Jumpei represents every man or woman as does Arjuna, but his prescription for living the good life is based not on the transcendence and permanent self (*atman*) suggested by Krishna to Arjuna, but on integration into the impermanent flow of the conditionality of all things.

enters into a family of sorts with an aborted fetus and a beetle-like woman in a barren land.

Jumpei develops and plays out numerous strategies and schemes to escape his conscription to shovel sand the rest of his life. After a crushing blow of the sand to his chest, he feigns an illness in hopes of further tiring the woman who cares for him. As she bathes him, her womanly odor does not go without notice, but nevertheless he ties and gags her in another attempt to force the hand of the villagers to negotiate. No sand will leave the pit as long as he is held captive. But soon he feels sorry for her and ungags her and eventually unties her. He even tries to dismantle portions of the house to build a ladder, but with the intercession from the woman this too fails and they almost end up making love. Only the fact that he does not have "protection" prevents this momentary union. Finally, they consummate their relationship and begin working again so they can begin receiving water again from the villagers because Jumpei now has "dirty hands." They shovel sand "The two, as if bound together" (154) and she teaches him more efficient ways of handling the shovel and removing the ever-present moist sand. She cares for him in the night, protecting him from the sand. They make love again and "The woman was glowing from within now, as if she were being washed by fire-flies" (166).

Another escape attempt entails making a rope ladder and he manages to climb out and makes a run for it, but is chased by wild dogs and falls into quicksand where he realizes the truth about death and individuality: "How dark it was. The whole world had closed its eyes and stopped its ears. No one would even turn around to look at his death spasms. Fear convulsed his throat and suddenly burst out. His jaw dropped open, and he gave an animal-like cry. 'Help!'" (201). Niki Jumpei had now crossed the threshold to the community of the Other, of the animal-like and insect-like villagers, because "What was the use of individuality when one was on the point of death? He wanted to go on living under any circumstances, even if his life had no more individuality than a pea in a pod." He pleads for his life and the villagers rescue him and return him to his pit where his woman in the dunes awaits, now feeling her failure, but he assures her he would have sent her the radio she had been wanting if his escape from the pit, from her, had been successful.

The chill of the arriving November winds is internalized by Jumpei and his last hope is like that of a shipwrecked sailor who places a note in a bottle and casts it into the abyss of the sea. Jumpei's act of desperation is to construct a crow trap and place his plea for rescue on its leg even though the radius of a crow's flight is limited. In this act of desperate optimism, he calls the trap "Hope." But no crows come to his Hope. As Jumpei awaits the arrival of hope in his trap, the woman strings beads in hope of earning extra yen for the radio she wants. November arrives and the air has changed since his arrival in August. He makes an attempt at negotiating once again with the basket hoisters who bring their supplies and haul out their sand. Jumpei is surprised at their answer: they request a live sex performance. The villagers gather at the top of the pit to gaze at the man and the woman, and the intimacy of their X-rated performance. "Let them be!" she protests. "But I want to get out, I really do. . . ." "But how can you . . . !" "You mustn't take it so seriously." "Have you gone out of your mind?" the woman suddenly gasped. "You must have. You've left your senses. I couldn't do a thing like that. I'm not sex-mad" (229). This reversal of morality only momentarily registers on the radar of Junpei's consciousness. "Was it really true? He wondered. Had he gone out of his mind. He winced from the women's vehemence, but inside spread a kind of perverse blankness. He had been trampled this much . . . what difference could appearances make now? If there was something wrong from the standpoint of the one being watched, then there was just as much wrong from the ones who were watching. There still might be some difference between them, but this little ceremony would be enough to make it vanish. And just think what he could get as a prize . . . ground on which he could walk where he wished" (230). Jumpei grabs the woman, throws her down, and entreats her to just pretend. She resists and pounds his face repeatedly with her fists until "Sand clung to the blood; his face was a lump of earth" (231). This final act of desperation to escape robs the woman of her subjectivity within her sand dwelling community, reduces her in its gaze of othering her as less than a participating subject in the community. This "othering" of the woman objectifies her as a means of escape for Niki and renders her intimacy an object of entertainment for those of her community on whom she depends for sustenance, social interaction, deliverance from loneliness, and as we later learn, for her medical care.

As the crowd disperses and Jumpei and his woman in the dunes return to the house, Jumpei realizes all went as it should and "It seemed that what remained of him had turned into a liquid and melted into her body," even through the *coitus interruptus* of their feigned intimacy (232). His reconciliation to offer himself to the woman in the dunes finally brings the hope he wishes to catch. But he catches no crows. Instead he notices the chance offering from his bucket of hope. The "suction of the contraption caused by capillary attraction never matched the speed of evaporation" (234). He finds that the "sand was an immense pump" (234). This discovery has, of course, the greatest of value to his captors, and to his woman in the dunes. Jumpei is elated at his discovery and makes plans to develop his bucket of hope into a more elaborate water producing mechanism. A change has come over him. He could renew his relationship with the villagers, but "he would have to start again from the beginning" (236).

Japanese culture and society is also significantly influenced by Confucian contributions. The self in Confucianism, as it is in Buddhism, is relationally defined, but is more focused on the relation of self to other human selves. The self from this perspective, as Herbert Fingarette has noted, is a "network of relations"[6] that finds itself as a nexus of social interactions and is driven by ritual propriety (*li*). One becomes human for Confucius by engaging in the *li* of one's culture. To engage in *li* in the proper spirit of authenticity and authoritative conduct (*ren*) is the highest achievement of becoming human.[7] Jumpei's discovery of manufacturing water from sand will be of profound value for the villagers. They are without his ability, his level of authority with respect to this particular matter. He is now in a position to really contribute authentically to his community and this ability to contribute is contingent upon him losing the sense of self he brought to this desolate land of shifting sands: "This change in the

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[6] See Herbert Fingarette, *Confucius — The Secular as Sacred*, New York: Harper and Row (1972). A revised chapter from this book is forthcoming in my *Contemporary Encounters with Confucius*, Open Court.

[7] For an excellent translation of Confucius' *Analects* see Roger T. Ames and Henry Rosemont, Jr., *The Analects of Confucius: A Philosophical Translation*, New York: Ballantine Books (1998). Another excellent, but slightly different, translation is Edward Slingerland, *Confucius Analects: With Selections from Traditional Commentaries*, Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing (2003).

sand [of realizing the otherness of its self in the form of water] corresponded to a change in himself. Perhaps, along with the water in the sand, he found a new self" (236). Just as the sand "realizes" itself in its otherness of water, Jumpei too discovers his self in the otherness of his individuality and freedom. This is his new hope.

Several more months drift by with the endless shifting sands before another opportunity to escape presents itself, and this is Niki Jumpei's real opportunity. Winter had passed into spring and by March they finally got the radio. The woman is joyous with this simple convenience from the great beyond and is so enamored with her new toy she turned "the dial left and right for half a day" (238). By the end of the month the woman in the dunes is pregnant. Two months later an omen appears in the form of, "Large white birds [that] kept flying over from east to west for three days in succession, and on the following day the lower part of her body was covered with blood and she complained of violent pain" (238). She is expertly diagnosed with an extra-uterine pregnancy by one of the villagers whose claim to medical expertise is that she has a veterinarian among her relatives. This nameless woman in the dunes is hauled out of the home she loves and taken to the hospital and Jumpei is left alone, completely alone, for the first time in almost a year except for his failed attempt to escape that ended him in another pit, a pit of quicksand.

> Even though she had been taken away, the rope ladder remained as it was. He hesitantly reached out and touched it with his fingertips. After making sure it would not vanish, he slowly began to climb up. The sky was dirty yellow. His arm and legs felt heavy, as if he had just come out of water. This was the long-awaited rope ladder. The wind seemed to snatch the breath from his mouth. . . . He breathed deeply, but the air only irritated his throat, it did not taste as he expected. (238)

Jumpei's freedom presents itself, finally. But his freedom brings the return of the heaviness of his earlier *Angst*. This time, however, he has cultivated its meaning. He sees something moving in the pit; his shadow moves in near proximity to the water trap, the transformed crow's trap called Hope. His shadow side now presents itself as an advisor. Jumpei notices the framework of his Hope had become loosened. "Perhaps someone had accidentally stepped on it when they

had come to take the woman out," he ponders (239). And now the most unexpected turn of events happens.

Although Abe has been preparing us all along for this moment of Niki Jumpei's transformation, we are even still surprised by this singularly appropriate conclusion; the only conclusion possible for our Japanese Joseph K. Jumpei descends the ladder toward his beckoning shadow in the pit, toward his hope, toward the human hope of humanity. This time, however, his descent into the pit is without coercion, without restriction. Niki Jumpei descends freely. He descends with hints of a newly discovered duty, and perhaps even with love, maybe a love for the first time, for he has descended already into himself, descended to a unsullied freedom for, not from, and to a purer responsibility than he has ever known, an authentic responsiveness to his thrown context of being human.

> The water, as his calculations had led him to expect, had risen to the fourth mark. The damage did not appear to be too great. In the house someone was singing in a rasping voice on the radio. He tried to stifle the sobbing that seemed about to burst from him; he plunged his hands into the bucket . . . . He sank down on his knees and remained inert, his hands still in the water. (239)

Niki Jumpei has finally found his way back home. His catharsis purges him of the self he mistakenly held as being true, as he merges with his shadow cast deeply into the pit where sand magically transforms itself into water, into its other.

> There was no particular need to hurry about escaping . . . . [H]e realized that he was bursting with a desire to talk to someone about the water trap. And if he wanted to talk about it, there wouldn't be better listeners than the villagers. He would end by telling someone — if not today, then tomorrow. He might as well postpone his escape until sometime after that. (239)

Niki Jumpei's self is now a self in context, a self-defined by the shifting sands of the strangeness of family and community. After much suffering — in the sandpit and the imbalance of his previous life in the indifference of some anonymous Japanese city — Niki Jumpei affirms the throwness of his existence, overcomes his suffering by developing the ability to correlate his conduct with those near at hand.

Niki Jumpei finds himself in his absence, is liberated in his captivity, and discovers meaning in the absurdity of his existential situation. The missing person report is filed. No one searches for him, he has been pronounced dead. Niki Jumpei, this missing person, finds himself with his community of sand dwellers, and becomes more alive than ever in the pronouncement of his death. He is more alive than ever, with hope, in this sand pit, with these culturally outcast *Burakumin*, and with his woman in the dunes.

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Ancient Greek Romance in Contemporary Female Autobiography

MARIA-LIISA JÄRVELÄ

When I started my autobiographical research as a postgraduate student in Social Sciences, I soon realised that it would be both interesting and instructive to broaden the traditional sociological approach and look at the autobiographies from a wider, interdisciplinary perspective. Consequently, I ended up applying Bakhtinian narrative analysis to my autobiographical data which consisted of young Finnish women's autobiographies (Järvelä 1994, 1996).The present article discusses some of the results of this endeavour.

Before exploring in greater detail the Bakhtinian narrative analysis applied to my data, I find it relevant to elaborate the question of the *autos* — the writing self — from gender perspective. Clearly it is the author that is the most significant element of the genre of autobiography, the other two being *bios* (life) and *graphe* (text), both of which are experienced and given meaning and form to by the autobiographical agent.

It is evident that female autobiography as a literary genre has a character of its own, one idiosyncratic feature being the strong tendency of subjectivation. The question of female identity in relation to postmodern subjectivity has been lively debated during the past couple of decades (e.g. Benhabib 1992; Miller 1994). Somewhat surprisingly perhaps, some of the features that have been addressed to postmodernity seem to fit female autobiography as well, a genre we might not at first hand call postmodern. One such feature typical of postmodern novel (see Tlostanova 2001: 78) is a certain type of fictionality which appears as correlation of reality and illusion, mythologizing the reality, showing fluidity and shiftiness of cultural authenticity, as well as depicting the self with many masks.

As for female agency in writing, it is claimed to show a special feature of interrelatedness. In fact, it has been argued that already the archetypal models of female autobiographies display the acknowledgement of the real presence and recognition of another consciousness (Mason 1980), which characterises the female autobiographers' identity construction in a relationship with the Chosen Other. This sort of *duo pattern* is fairly common in women's life-writing. The first female autobiographers Dame Julian of Norwich as well as Margery Kempe already wrote about mystical dialogues with a divine being who was both the Creator, Father and Lover.[1] These women discovered and revealed themselves in discovering and revealing the Other. In fact, this type of fictional, even bizarre and picaresque elements typical of female gothic novels were present in women's autobiographies right from the beginning, thus the history of the novel is importantly premised in the seventeenth-century autobiographies by women. These early autobiographies established something that can best be described as the subject in process, the evolution and delineation of an identity by way of alterity. (Paananen 1995: 135ff, 207ff, Swindells 1989: 28)

In contemporary female autobiography written by Finnish women, we often find Nature as the Chosen Other. Nature is personified, it is a friend and a lover, or a child to be cared for. It is a natural part of the interraleted female self, as is seen in the following extract from one of the autobiographies in my research data:

> On my way back home from the sauna, there are a rabbit's footprints in the white snow in the moonlight and the frost is snapping and cracking in the trees. I stop and I am a human being like a tree, snow drift, ink blue sky and stars. My eyes are ink blue wet stars, cheeks as glowing embers of the fire place in the sauna, lips red and soft. My hair turns into icy sticks that I can suck at home afterwards.

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[1] Similarly, Margaret Cavendish, the Duchess of Newcastle, wrote both her own and her husband's autobiographies in a double image, splitting her self-image in two: in a utopian fantasy, *The Blazing World*, she appeared both as the Duchess of Newcastle and as the Empress of the Blazing World turning the traditional male activities, history and warfare, into feminine enterprises.

One explanatory link between autobiography and the interrelational female self is found in social constructionism, which locates gender and identity in interaction, in social space rather than inside the individual. Instead of creating individualistic heroic narratives, social constructionism emphasises relational processes in life histories (e.g. Nikander 1995). Seen from this perspective, enhancing the relational qualities of autobiographical female subjectivities is also a question of identity politics. If the autobiographical voice is that of togetherness and mutuality, the self is interpreted in terms of jointness rather than oneness, mutual rather than atomistic (e.g. Komulainen 1995).

In women's writing, the interrelatedness of the female self often rises out of necessity: if women's duties within the social are so numerous and demanding, it is by no means a wonder that their identities, or the sense of their selves are "many-faceted"[2]. The example below from an autobiography by a young Finnish woman illustrates this.

> Every day I recognise something that stays in my mind that should be written down, at least briefly. It's just that I don't seem to have time (---) School, tests, essays, research, reading, writing, Christ, it's unbelievable how I managed to take care of the child, home, husband, animals, food, laundry, cleaning up, ironing, and keeping company. I know how it feels to be constantly a mother, a wife, and a home keeper with a bad conscience, and also: not so good a sister, daughter or friend.

This piece of writing shows how women experience their position in contemporary society: even today, women often have the feeling of stealing some time and space from others, feeling selfish and guilty of wanting to spend more time on their own, have some space of their own.

The idea of interrelational self is found even in Bakhtin's view of identity formation: the self is multi-voiced and it only exists in dialogue with other voices. In this dialogism, there is the thought of individuals needing others to help constitute themselves as persons (Phillips 1997: 91). Thus our speech is filled with varying degrees of otherness and varying degrees of our-own-ness, varying degrees of

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[2] Accurately, the autobiography contest for women arranged in Finland in 1991, from which my original sample was drawn was titled *Women with Hundreds of Facets (Satasärmäinen nainen).*

awareness and detachment, creating the plurality of voices and polyphony of consciousnesses, resulting in heteroglossia in our thoughts and in their outcomes (Bakhtin 1981: 6–7, 1986: 89, see also Holquist 1981: xix and Worton & Still 1990: 11).

To sum up, in women's autobiographies selves are distributed interpersonally, in polyphony, gaining their meaning from historical circumstances and cultural values. In autobiographical writing, self-construction processes take place in inner dialogues, in Tinne Vammen's (1994: 51–54) words: it is like shadow boxing between the writer now and the person that she once was. In autobiographical moments, the autobiographers' former selves become alive again. Bakhtin's conception of the significance of the inner addressee as well as that of the various languages of different age groups (see Holquist 1981: xix) are relevant here as I am focussing on time-space relations specifically in the autobiographies of young women.

In women's autobiographies we deal with highly subjective, yet shared cultural-ontological dimensions, moving in the imagined landscapes created by the writing women. In chronotopes, the spatial and temporal indicators are fused into one concrete whole: time thickens, takes on flesh and becomes artistically visible. Likewise, space becomes charged and responsive to the movements of time, plot and history. (Bakhtin 1981: 84ff) As Carr (1986: 94ff) says, human individuals constantly need to locate themselves; like the Here in relation to the space we perceive, the Now is a vantage point from which we survey the past and the future. To exist humanly is not merely to be in time but to encompass it as our gaze takes in our surroundings. Thus we can say that human reality is a kind of temporal reach by virtue of which we construct our life histories.

Bakhtin held the view that time is the dominant principle of the two components of chronotope, whereas the contemporary analysts (myself included) often hold the view that the emphasis may swift from one element to the other, or hover in-between, as is shown by Madina Tlostanova (2001, 77) in her analysis of the chronotopes in the works of contemporary trans-cultural writers. Understandably, the weaker the author's connection with a particular culture, the stronger the element of invented-ness and artistic intentionality, when the

writer freely plays on various cultural *topi*, remaking and rethinking the fictional reality.[3]

In Bakhtin's theory, a fundamental notion is that time-space relationship makes the basic category of human perception precisely because it enables us to organise our reality. The features of different eras are realised in spatial characteristics, i.e. in locality — which again is measured temporally. As the basic Bakhtinian category of time-space relationship is dependent on cultural and historical circumstances, there is a continuous relationship between the text and the world (e.g. Lodge 1990: 22). Thus the chronotopes are not universal but changeable, they are culturally bound and dynamic, in fact, humankind has become aware of different temporal and spatial characteristics in different phases of its history and made use of this realisation in its cultural production. But Bakhtin also remarked that there are in all literary forms archaic elements that are preserved and renewed due to the interaction with historical and cultural reality (see Palin 1991: 130). Based on this assumption, my intention is to show that there is a pattern of chronotopes in Ancient Greek Romance described by Bakhtin which recurs in contemporary cultural products, even in my autobiographical data. What I claim is that the time-space markers occupy similar functions in both of these genres showing basically the same type of storyline. Admittedly, a castle may have changed into a house, even a cafe, but the significance of the place is the same: it is the setting where the lovers meet, or depart, and it is a necessary setting for the story to advance.

From my research perspective it is noteworthy that chronotope as a formally constitutive category largely determines even the female and male images; in fact, heroes and heroines are by their very nature chronotopic. Bakhtin also focused on the maturational aspects of heroes and heroines: do they change, do they develop as the story proceeds, or do they remain basically the same throughout the story?[4]

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[3] Fictional reality is not the only context which Bakhtin's notions of choronotopes have been applied to, as is shown by Tom Phillips (1997) who wants to use Bakhtin's theories in approaching the "messy cultural phenomena" such as teaching in the classroom. As for Bakhtinian dialogue in Critical Pedagogy, see Burbules (2000).

[4] Human development is portrayed in Bakhtin's analyses of *Prüfungsroman, Entwicklungsroman, Erziehungsroman* as well as the realistic *Bildungsroman*, which is the nearest relative of autobiography (e.g. Palin 1991: 127ff).

This sounds very much like the questions we focus on in autobiographical research, it being a genre with strong emphasis on agency, on personae.

Admittedly, Bakhtinian chronotope is by no means a simple concept, and it becomes even more complicated when applied to a specific literary genre (such as autobiography) produced by a certain group of writers representing certain culture, certain age and gender (e.g. young Finnish women). When discussing the chronotopes in contemporary fiction Tlostanova (2001: 82) points out the demand of re-defining the category of chronotope by making international, trans-cultural and trans-disciplinary interpretations, which again are linked with the problematics of cultural-linguistic translation. Carrying out the analysis of the chronotopes in my own sample made me well aware of these problems. Clearly, analysing autobiographical narration from Bakhtinian perspectives means reading philosophical significance into the narration. The women's life stories show something like a "jigsaw principle", they are made of pieces of puzzle that need to find their place in order the picture of one's life to become whole. The key pieces are, classically, romance and destiny, life finding its fulfilment in love propelled by the twists of fate. The recognition of symbols in a text normally heightens the abstraction level of the narrative, which tends to make the interpretation into a formal game with profundities sometimes very far from realities of the daily life. As for my data, there is no such danger: despite the romantic quality, there is a convincing taste of reality woven in these women's stories.

In my analysis, the question I propose is: *in what sort of space is the autobiography-time realised in contemporary female autobiography*? My argument is that in the basic composite scheme of women's autobiographies today, the details of the narratives differ, but the basic spatial-temporal elements with their mental functions remain largely the same. These spatial-temporal elements seem to be the skeleton of the story: they organise the women's lives and give coherence to the story. To illustrate the functions of these elements, I draw a parallel between the chronotopes in the Ancient Greek Romance and those in contemporary female autobiography. In the following, I quote one female autobiography which bears great resemblance to several others, written by Finnish women born in the 1960s. The chronotopes below (all in *italics*) are mentioned by

Bakhtin (1981) and show characteristics of what he called *adventuristic chance-time.*

Normally, the starting point of the plot movement in women's autobiographies is a detailed description of the writer's birth, but also the time before that (life of parents and grandparents) is often commented upon. The story proceeds in segments of *biological time* and the life lived up till the writing moment is divided in periods of childhood, youth and adulthood. These periods are expressed as *biographical sequences,* which are then connected with detailed spatial markers, for example childhood images are closely tied to home and nearby surroundings. As the autobiographers in my sample grew up in the 60s and 70s, their childhood descriptions reflect the living conditions in Finland in those days.

In women's autobiographies, both happy and unhappy childhood memories are carefully reported. Some events have *biographical significance* since they leave recognisable traces in persons' lives, causing traumas but creating also some beautiful memories. Christmas time belongs intimately to childhood and is seldom omitted. The recurring customs of the family and the Christmas presents, which had the magic of filling the whole year with joy and gratitude are affectionately depicted, whether it was a rag doll sewn by the mother, or a wise-eyed Teddy Bear with repaired paws, still sitting on the writer's book shelf.

The *quotidian sequences* illustrate the autobiographers' everyday life discussing important issues in teenage life: was the school big or small, near or far, did the girl have friends there or not, were teachers nice or unpleasant, etc. The *maturational sequences* appear all along as the autobiographers grow older. In adolescence quite many female autobiographers seem to move into a period in life that corresponds to Bakhtin's *adventure-time*: the geographical space around them widens and they travel first into the nearby village or town, perhaps even to a big city like Helsinki. Weekends and holidays are for seeking fun and pleasure, for example in dancing places. Even though most autobiographies by contemporary women still show the recurring chronotope of days passed in the kitchen, they also display that of evenings passed in the restaurants. These are indications of *historical time:* the previous women generations, the mothers or grandmothers of these autobiographers, scarcely spent any nights in restaurants in their youth.

Teenage girls' trips to the village centre or a nearby town on their own is a sign of growing independence and gradual separation from home and family. The event structure in these autobiographies often shows thematic development equivalent of that in road movies — the girls are on the run, wanting to conquer the world. But first, there is the nearby town or village to be taken, only then the rest of the world. Amusingly, the girls' preparations for the adventures of the evening take hours and have a ritualistic character:

> At that time shyness was falling off when we were hurrying from one place to another. Weekends were even more important. Then we went dancing, and trying the clothes on and making ourselves up could take hours. The eye make-up had to be real heavy and if there was anything 'wrong' with even one of the eyelashes, everything was washed away and the whole operation was started again from the beginning!

There are problems on the way to adulthood as the world turns out to be a far scarier place for girls than expected. We know that certain places at certain hours are dangerous for women, like city centres at late nights, places of adult entertainment and the streets nearby them. Some researchers (e.g. Koskela 1994) speak of paradoxical space. In these places women are simultaneously in the centre of the masculine gaze, but socially in the margin, while women's sense of embodiment can make urban space feel like alien territory, oppressive and aggressive. Thus the adventures at night have their risks, especially for women, and sometimes they end up sadly, as in the present story:

> We were heading for a dancing place and my girl friend was eagerly emptying a wine bottle before we left. I warned her because I knew that the doormen were very strict when they checked people coming in. As I had feared, my friend didn't get in. (---) Early in the morning she phoned and asked me to come to the cafe in the shopping-centre and bring her some money for the bus fare. Somehow she seemed depressed and dizzy, but she didn't tell me until the next time we met what had actually happened that evening. Two men had attacked her and dragged her into a gateway of a block of flats and both of them had raped her cold-bloodedly, taken her money and left her lying there.

In the adventures, the girls' morals are tested. Interestingly, Bakhtin's view of the dialogic modern novel, the realistic *Bildungsroman* (unlike the earlier *Prüfungsroman*) emphasises the individual's two-folded personality: both the good and the bad exist as potentialities in the hero/ine. In the *Bildungsroman* the individuals have all the possibilities to develop into better persons.

Eventually, the autobiographers leave home and family in order to study or work somewhere else, usually in a bigger town or a city. The geographical space is often widened by travelling abroad, in this particular autobiography the girl visits the Red Lights' district in Amsterdam as well as St. Pauli and Reberbahn in Hamburg. The threats posed by these places are diminished by *the innocence that protects* the traveller, people being kind to her:

> We were having fun but it was all so innocent (---) I sometimes wondered how we happened to meet only decent and honest people.

In Bakhtin's (1981) analysis of the Greek romance the *adventuristic chance-time* introduces irrational forces that interrupt the "normal" life. These nonhuman forces — Fate or Gods — make an intrusion in the heroine's life, appearing sometimes in a villain's form. In these instances persons are above all physical, not autonomous psychological beings: things more or less just "happen to them". Consequently, individual motifs such as meeting/parting, loss/acquisition, search/discovery and recognition/nonrecognition become constituent elements of the plot. The adventuristic chance-time has its specific logic, *the logic of random contingency and random disjunctions in time.*

These elements of adventuristic chance-time are by their very nature chronotopic, i.e. the temporal markers are inseparable of the spatial markers. These elements have traditionally been employed in various literary works as well as in the cinema[5]. Films of fated love with narratives of Grand Destiny are characterised by recurring signs, symbols and images: there are opposites, doubles, mirror images and puns, there are parallels, circles and polarities. Taking this to extremes, literally, the Basque director Julio Medem's *Los amantes*

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[5] Masterly examples of this are Jacques Demy's films *Les Parapluies de Cherbourg* (1964) and *Les Filles de Rochfort* (1967) as well as Krzysztof Kieslowski's *The Double Life of Véronique* (1991) and *Three colours: Red* (1994). In these films the game of Fate determines people's lives.

del Círculo Polar (1998) makes an excellent example of the Bakhtinian thought of how human lives are structured: the segments of adventure time are organised from outside, more or less technically, in a kind of geometrical construction (see Romney 2000). What is important is to escape, to catch up, to be or not to be in a given place at a given moment. *Chance simultaneity* as well as *chance rupture* (non-meeting) are crucially significant. Positive motifs (to meet) are constantly threatened by the negative motifs (did not meet/parted). In some cases (as in films by Jacques Demy and Julio Medem) the life trajectories of people have no chance to be united, and sadly enough, the lovers miss the chance of happiness.

In my autobiographical example, the plot movement shows a typical composite scheme with *the motif of search/discovery.* Here the girl meets the boy:

> When my first summer holiday started, I travelled home to spend it there. I had made up with an old schoolmate that I would meet her in the nearby town the next day after my arrival. When we had spent some time together, I said I had to be getting back home because I had promised to meet my best childhood friend the same day. My friend tried to prevent me from leaving and asked me to stay, but I suggested that she would walk with me and we could go on chatting until a car would pick me up. I was namely hitch-hiking again. We had barely reached the road when the first car arrived and I waved my thumb when the car to our great surprise stopped after having put on the brakes violently. I waved my friend goodbye and ran to the car to ask if I could jump in. In the chauffeur's seat there sat a dark-haired young man with a moustache (---)

The couple's first meeting is unexpected. This is *the instant of recognition or nonrecognition*: is he/she the Right One? At this point, also the motif of the *false couple* is introduced:

> In the chauffeur's seat there sat a dark-haired young man with a moustache who I thought would be about five years older than me, and sitting beside him there was a blond girl about my age. It was unusual that 'couples' picked up a hiker so I thought these must be nice people.

Because the man shows his keen interest right from the beginning, the author wonders why the girl sitting next to him does not seem to mind it at all. Of course, the girl is not his sweetheart but his sister, as the man explains when suggesting a date. While doubt is an essential part of the classical storyline, she does not believe him at first:

> I thought, for heaven's sake, the bloke really has guts to lie! But when he so heartily begged me to meet him later the same week in the nearest town, I promised in a hurry before his 'sister' came back from the toilet and because I wanted to get safely to the table where my girl friend was waiting for me. When the couple then waved goodbye, thousands of thoughts crossed my mind.

There is an immediate flare-up of passion, but the couple's love is also a subject to doubt and it has to be tested in action. The couple has to part in order *to experience first the loss and then the acquisition* — to see if they qualify as true lovers and deserve their love. Thus, as in the Ancient Greek Romance, there emerges a *temporal hiatus*: a negative chronotopic sign threatens to ruin the couple's life: they may miss the appointment if they do not arrive at a given place in time. On the day the couple has agreed to meet, the writer starts her trip to the meeting place. The road chronotope is present again as she has decided to hitch-hike. But this is an exceptional day; the cars do not stop to give her a lift and she is already convinced that she will never meet him again. But in adventure-time they have qualified as lovers and the Fate, being the rule-generating force that controls the chronotopes is on the couple's side, so *the spatial obstacle is overcome*. This is stated explicitly by the writer herself:

> But it must be true that when 'the Fate' has decided to intervene in your life, there's nothing to prevent it. I was there in time, and that man became the nicest possible companion for me. Now we have lived together almost 14 years! I've sometimes laughed and said that I'm still on the same hitch-hiking trip and that I shall let him know if I want to get out.

The hero's firm decision to win the heroine's heart made him pass the test:

> Later he told me that he had immediately got this feeling that if he had let me go, without even having tried to arrange the meeting, he would have regretted it for the rest of his life. He says he hasn't yet regretted that he suggested the date (---)

The temporal gap that Bakhtin (1981: 91) calls *empty time* occurs in the plot movement after the wedding bells: "(---) and then life had its own peaceful course". This is a common feature in women's autobiographies: when the couple has found each other and settled down, years may pass without anything special to record. This empty time with empty space shows little *maturational duration*, rather it seems that the crises contribute to personal growth rather than the quiet periods of life. The biggest crisis this particular woman has to solve is linked with family life: first the pregnancy was delayed, and when finally pregnant, there were serious medical complications. However, the autobiography completes a circle as it ends with the same theme as it started with: childbirth. As in Medem's *Los amantes del Círculo Polar*, life is ruled by circles and polarities, by repetition and doubling. To find the fulfilment for their happiness in having a child of their own, the couple must overcome great obstacles, disappointments and sufferings. Finally, the dream of building a "real" family comes true and a healthy baby boy is born.

In my analysis of women's autobiographies, I have mapped together the sublime (Ancient Greek Romance) with the commonplace (contemporary young women's autobiographies). This is an essentially Bakhtinian notion as his idea of the chronotopes in human life covers a whole variety of contrasting forces illustrated by contrasting spaces: sacred and secular, life as well as death (e.g. Tlostanova 2001: 76–77). To sum up my analysis, I quote Bakhtin (1981: 106) who concluded his analysis of the Ancient Greek Romance with words that seem to capture the essence of the genre of novel but to my mind also much of human life writing:

> Everything returns to its source, everything returns to its own place. The result of this whole lengthy novel is that — the hero marries his sweetheart. And yet people and things have gone *through* something, something

> that did not, indeed, change them but that did (in a manner of speaking) affirm what they, and precisely they, were as individuals, something that did verify and establish their identity, their durability and continuity.

At the end of the story, harmony, a blessed state of equilibrium is reached when "everything returns to its own place" and the jigsaw puzzle is completed. This particular autobiography like many others, witnesses of the traditional, even conservative way of perceiving and establishing female existence: it is achieved through significant others, and especially through a man — The Man of her life. In my example case, the boy child completes the picture of the perfect family upon which the woman's identity can solidly be built.

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Maternal Spaces in the Diaries of Aino Kallas, Virginia Woolf and Anaïs Nin

LEENA KURVET-KÄOSAAR

"It is easy to think", write Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson in their textbook format work on working with life narratives, "that autobiographical subjectivity and autobiographical texts have little to do with the material body" (Smith and Watson 2002: 37). Smith and Watson proceed to maintain that "the body is a site of autobiographical knowledge, as well as a textual surface upon which a person's life is inscribed". (Ib. 37) The two different ways of manifestations of the body that, according to Smith and Watson, should matter in critical considerations of autobiography, roughly follow the two trends of conceptualizing the body in contemporary philosophical thought, "the body as a surface of social inscription and as the locus of lived experience" (Grosz 1993: 188). Elizabeth Grosz sees the first approach as "conce[iving] the body as a surface on which social law, morality, and values are inscribed" and the second as "referr[ing] largely to the lived experience of the body, the body's internal or psychic inscription". (Ib.) Tracing the first line of thought via Nietzsche, Kafka, Foucault, and Deleuze (ib. 196), the second is "more influenced by psychology, especially psychoanalysis and phenomenology" (ib.) and can be found in the works of Freud, Lacan, Merleau-Ponty and some "psychoanalysts and neurophysiologists working on body image in the 1920's and 1930's" (ib. 200–201). While Grosz's selection of authors on whom she constructs the two paradigms of thought, is perhaps contestable[1], her definitions of the

[1] In a book-format study of various conceptualizations of the body in the 20th century, *Volatile bodies* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994),

two categories, in my opinion, offer a useful point of entry into contemporary theoretizations of the body.

Over the past years, much of my scholarly work has been centered around issues of subjectivity in the diaries of three woman writers of the first half of the 20th century, Virginia Woolf (1882–1941), Aino Kallas (1878–1956), Anaïs Nin (1903–1977), in particular subjectivity's relation to the body. My writings on the role of the body in the constructions of the three writers' diaristic self-representation[2] have, however, focused more extensively on "the inscriptive and productive functioning of social bodies marked in their sexual difference" (Grosz 1994: 189) than on "psychoanalytic and phenomenological investigations of sexual specificity" (ib. 189). I would like now to offer some insights into the diaries of Aino Kallas, Virginia Woolf and Anaïs Nin within the framework of 'the lived body' paradigm taking as my focus the creation of maternal spaces in the three diaries.

Although a clearly articulated and uniformly understood concept of the maternal space does not exist as such, various aspects of motherhood and the mother-child relationship have played an important role in the thought of various important feminist philosophers, such as Simone de Beauvoir and Iris Marion Young, whose thought is related to Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology, or Julia Kristeva, Hélène Cixous and

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Grosz offers a discussion of somewhat different range of authors, such as Freud, Lacan, Caillois, Schilder, Merleau-Ponty, Irigaray, I. M: Young, and Butler in a section titled "The Inside Out" (Grosz 1994, v), corresponding to the second category and Lingis, Foucault, and Deleuze and Guattari in the section titled "The Outside In" (Grosz 1994, v), corresponding to the first category. In a rather brief section of her work titled "Sexed Bodies" (Grosz 1994, pp. 187–210), Grosz, putting forth her own ideas of the body and sexual difference, also discusses some feminist thinkers, mainly Julia Kristeva but also Mary Douglas and Iris Marion Young.

[2] See, for example, "Anaïs With(in) Henry and June: in Search of a Self in The Diary of Anaïs Nin Volume I and Henry and June." In ed. Krista Vogelberg, Points of Convergence: Selected Papers of the 5th International Tartu Conference on North-American Studies. Tartu: Tartu University Press 2003, 64–78; "Claiming and Disclaiming the Body in the Early Diaries of Virginia Woolf, Anaïs Nin, and Aino Kallas." Writi*ng, Memoirs, Autobiography and History. Feminismo/s* 4, 2004, pp. 69–84, and "Tracing Desire in the Diaries of Virginia Woolf, Aino Kallas and Anaïs Nin." Forthcoming in ed. Sabine Coelsh-Foisner et al *Fiction and Autobiography*. Salzburg Studies in English Literature and Culture (SEL&C), Frankfrut et al: Lang, 2005/2006.

Luce Irigaray, who have rethought central paradigms of psychoanalytic thought as canonized by Freud and Lacan. The feminist philosophers referred to above evoke the maternal in diverse contexts and theoretical frames; their thought can be viewed as having been targeted toward an articulation of women's[3] embodied subjectivity. Within the framework of this article it is not possible for me to offer a thorough overview of the 'lived body' tradition as articulated in the thought of Beauvoir, Young, Kristeva, Irigaray and Cixous, nor is it my objective as such. Instead, I want to investigate maternal spaces in the diary of Aino Kallas via the lenses of Simone de Beauvoir's perception of body as a situation, the diary of Virginia Woolf via Julia Kristeva's concept of *chora* and the diary of Anaïs Nin via Hélène Cixous' notion of *écriture féminine*. Rather than using the diaries as textual raw materials for the application of theory, I strive to make visible the intricate, often contradictory web of implications that emerges from the comparative consideration of embodied subjectivity in six women's texts writing in different time frames and cultural contexts.

Aino Kallas, Virginia Woolf, and Anaïs Nin share the larger socio-cultural background of European *fin-de-siécle* and early 20th century modernism characterized by the gradual erosion of the solid ontological basis of human existence that prevailed in the 19th century and the circulation of various different competing paradigms of comprehending the world, among them the emergence of scientific discourses of sexuality (Bristow 1997: 6, Foucault 1980: 54), which influenced diverse realms of human activity from medical practice to the fine arts, and facilitated a common understanding of the sexual nature of subjectivity.

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> [Le corps] est notre prise sur le monde et l'esquise de nos projets'[4]
> (S. de Beauvoir, *Le deuxiéme sexe*, 73).

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[3] I am fully aware that my use of the word 'woman' here, while justified as far as I am referring to Beauvoir's and Young's thought, is much more vulnerable to criticism where the thought of Kristeva, Irigaray and Cixous is concerned.

[4] "[The body] is our grasp on the world and a sketch of our projects" (translated by Moi in Moi 1999: 62).

In her recent work *What is a Woman?* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), Toril Moi offers a thorough analysis of Simone de Beauvoir's theory of the body. She considers Beauvoir's claim about body being a situation (Beauvoir 1993: 35), "a powerful and sophisticated alternative to contemporary sex and gender theories" (Moi 1999: 59). Functioning as "the radiation of subjectivity" (Beauvoir 1993: 281) for both men and women, the body is "the instrument that makes possible[5] the comprehension of the world" (ib. 281). What is important here is that for Beauvoir, "the body as an object is *not* the ground on which the body as a situation is constructed; a woman is not the sum of the 'objective' and the situational perspective on the body. A woman defines herself through the way she lives her embodied situation in the world" (Moi 1999: 72, see also Beauvoir 1993: 38). Moi's emphasis on active embodied agency here highlights the core of Beauvoir's treatment of body as a situation: "body does not gain lived reality unless it is taken on by consciousness through activities and in the bosom of the society" (Beauvoir 1949: 77, Moi's translation in Moi 1999: 71). Against her initial, utterly ironic claim at the beginning of the chapter "The Data of Biology" (Beauvoir 1993: 3–38) that "woman is womb, she is a female — this word is sufficient to define her" (ib. 3) Beauvoir constructs a versatile, embodied paradigm of human subjectivity that envisions also for woman — whose existence has commonly been characterized by immanence, a mode of existence characterized by the possibility for agency and the freedom of her projects. In the concluding section of *The Second Sex*, Beauvoir articulates a call for women to be "productive and active" as a way for "regaining their transcendence" for "in [their] projects [they] concretely affirm [their] status as subject[s]" (ib. 713).

Next, I want to look at the possibilities of gaining transcendence in Beauvoir's treatment of motherhood, which she considers an important part of woman's situation, dedicating one chapter of *The Second Sex* to an investigation of both its possibilities and limits. It would be worth considering the textual representation of pregnancy and motherhood in the diary of Aino Kallas, in particular her contemplation of her situation during her first pregnancy, within the framework of de Beauvoir's general understanding of the body as "our

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[5] Toril Moi's use of the word 'accomplishes' instead of 'makes possible' when quoting the same section from the *Second Sex* (Moi 1999: 391), puts the emphasis more directly the actual lived experience of the body.

grasp on the world and a sketch of our projects" (Beauvoir 1949: 73, translated in Moi 1999: 62) as well as her more specific treatment of motherhood. Such comparative reading, in my opinion, enables valuable insights into subjectivity's embodiedness in the diary of Aino Kallas, also making visible some possibilities and limits of Beauvoir's treatment of the woman's body.

In Book Two of *The Second Sex,* titled "Woman's Life Today", which outlines the situation of the married woman, Beauvoir points out that in marriage, "a man is socially independent and complete individual /.../; the reproductive and domestic role to which woman is confined has not guaranteed her an equal dignity" (Beauvoir 1993: 448). The correspondence of Aino Krohn and Oskar Kallas during their engagement[6] demonstrates that the distribution of gender roles in marriage was an important topic, one on which the opinions of Aino Krohn and Oskar Kallas often differed. Textual reflections on the period of engagement, both in Aino Kallas' diary, as well as in her letters to Oskar Kallas can be characterized by a passionate, elevated mood, suggesting that she was looking forward to her marriage with high expectations. However, right after the wedding, the moods of frustration, of being lost and confused and of being not herself seem to take over her diary (certainly with exceptions) for almost twenty years to come. While I am not suggesting that this is indicative of the fact that Aino Kallas never grew used to and fond of family life, or that her relationship with her husband was only problematic all through the years of most intensive family life, the diary seems to imply that the life of a married woman and a mother created again and again situations that called for the redefinition and reformulation of her subjectivity. The end of the first diary volume (August 1900–1906) and the next two volumes covering the years 1907–1921, in particular the second one, titled in Estonian *Frozen Champagne* (*Jäätunud šampanja*)[7], offer subtle and receptive insights in Aino Kallas's struggles for preserving the freedom of her own projects, in particular

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[6] The correspondence of Aino and Oskar Kallas has not been published and is currently located both in the Finnish Literary Society (SKS) archives in Helsinki and in the archives of the Estonian Literary Museum in Tartu. The letters from the period of engagement are located in SKS archives. On the subject of gender roles in marriage, see, for example, Kallas, Oskar, SKS 438:1:16 (Oct 03, 1899) and SKS 438:1:17 (Oct 10, 1899).

[7] Tallinn: Eesti Raamat, 1994.

those involving the development of her creative capacities. Change comes only with the family's move to London when the diary largely abandons the confessional mood and emerges as a record of the social life of the Kallas family in London diplomatic circles as well as a record of the advancement of the career of Aino Kallas as a writer.

Very soon after her wedding on August 11, 1900, Aino Kallas becomes pregnant with her first child, daughter Virve Ainikki, born May 1901. As Aino Kallas herself notes, the birth of the first child so soon after her wedding is somewhat unexpected and she is perhaps not yet ready for this: "When we met a year ago I became at once his fiancée, and when I gave myself to him in beautiful Sigulda, at once I became the mother of his child" (Kallas 1994: 192). Other children quickly follow: Laine in August 1902, Sulev in January 1904, Lembitu, who was born with a severe handicap and died a few days later, in July 1906, and the third son Hillar in December 1910.

For Beauvoir, it is "in maternity that woman fulfills her physiological destiny; it is her natural calling, since her whole organic structure is adapted for the perpetuation of the species" (1993: 509). How women experience pregnancy and motherhood is for Beauvoir much dependent on the social context that plays a crucial role in her account of woman's subordinated status in motherhood (see, for example Ward 1995: 235). However, even in cases when motherhood is a woman's freely chosen act, according to Beauvoir, the woman nonetheless cannot escape the immanence her subjectivity melts into during her pregnancy. Maintaining that the woman feels pregnancy "at once as an enrichment and an injury; the fetus is part of her body and it is a parasite that feeds on it" (1993: 520) Beauvoir first seems to leave at least a possibility for a positive, embodied self-definition for the woman. However, her further claim, "the transcendence of the artisan, or the man in action, contains the element of subjectivity; but in the mother-to-be the antithesis of subject and object ceases to exist; she and the child with which she is swollen make up an equivocal pair overwhelmed by life" (ib. 521) initiates a definite erasure of subjectivity, facilitating the conclusion: "ensnared by nature, the pregnant woman is a plant and an animal /.../ who has become life's passive instrument" (ib.).[8]

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[8] Kristeva's treatment of pregnancy in her "Motherhood according to Bellini", in particular the beginning of the essay has also been interpreted "as a process without a subject, as the abandonment of agency" (Gross, 1990:

Such position, in my opinion, contradicts Beauvoir's formulation of the embodied basis of all subjectivity articulated in the chapter "The Data of Biology" against the common understanding that saying that woman is "a womb, an ovary /…/ is sufficient to define her" (ib. 3). It is true that Beauvoir contemplates the possibility for women to go through "the ordeal" (ib. 526) of pregnancy and enter motherhood with relative ease; this is most likely to happen with "matrons who are wholly concentrated to their reproductive function and those mannish women who are not particularly fascinated by the adventures of their bodies" (ib. 527). Beauvoir does not dwell much on the 'matron' type of woman but refers to two examples of the 'mannish woman': Madame de Staël, who went through her pregnancy "without fuss" (ib.) and Colette, whom her friends complimented on "'a man's pregnancy' [because she] was not absorbed in it" (ib. 528). The use of the term 'man's (or mannish) pregnancy' that seems to be Beauvoir's ideal is characterized above all as a successful attempt for the woman to overcome her body and through this to preserve the freedom of her projects. It is clear that in pregnancy, body itself can in no active way partake in transcendence and the only way to achieve it is through a disembodied frame of mind.

The way in which Aino Kallas represents her pregnancies and motherhood in the her diary has several features in common with Beauvoir's treatment of the same topic, so that some extracts of her diary seems to serve as perfect illustrations to Beauvoir's work. Among such aspects are Aino Kallas' reflection on the role of the mother, her relationship to her own mother and the outlining of possible scenarios for motherhood. Beauvoir also maintains that often the wife models her feelings on pregnancy on her husband (1993: 520); Aino Kallas mentions that just as her husband woke the woman in her, he now is developing her maternal feelings:

He talks about me becoming a mother as if he would bow to something high and mysterious and in immense respect for the marvelous development of woman's nature and body. And I start seeing with his eyes" (1994: 202)

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95). "Cells fuse, and proliferate; volumes grow, tissues stretch and body fluids change rhythm, (Kristeva 1995: 301)" writes Kristeva. "Within the body, growing as a graft, there is another. And no one is present, within that simultaneously dual and alien space, to signify what is going on" (ib. 301).

The extract, apart from displaying Aino Kallas' recognition of her husband's support, also seems to imply a state of confusion and insecurity on the side of the author of the diary: she needs someone to remind her that pregnancy entails wonderful spiritual and corporeal possibilities of development for woman. Aino Kallas also reveals her inner conflicts and fears of perceiving her unborn child as a stranger, since the language in which her children will think will not be the same as hers; "I feel like a caged bird, " she says, "from whom her children have been taken even before they have been born" (ib. 202). Aino Kallas is here referring to the Estonian language that her children will grow up speaking but the way in which she formulates her thoughts also evokes the implications of the maternal and the paternal order of language, named in various ways by different psychoanalysts (e.g. Freud, Lacan, Kristeva). As a writer, being part of the Finnish culture is of ultimate importance for Aino Kallas also after accepting Estonia as her homeland; considering as she does in various entries her children, like her work, her creation, it is no wonder that the assumed cultural and linguistic split between her children and herself is likely to keep troubling her.[9]

While the diary of Aino Kallas demonstrates several similarities between her experience of motherhood and Beauvoir's account, there are also some aspects where the experience differs, manifested, for example, in the manner Aino Kallas perceives her pregnancies, in particular her first pregnancy. "The physical process going on in me is paralleled by a compatible intellectual one," Aino Kallas writes in October 1900 when she is expecting her first child:

> Similar to the child who grows and develops without any need for external assistance, everything that has settled in my soul over the years now starts growing. All my feelings, thoughts and experiences accumulate and blend into one and it seems that the [right] time for writing is coming close. It is as if I was carrying in my womb not one but two children (ib. 193).

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[9] The topic however, is not raised as problematic in later diary entries. The children of Aino and Oskar Kallas grew up bilingual, speaking Finnish to their mother and Estonian to their father, so that the cultural estrangement that Aino Kallas feared never took place in full force.

She feels an especially strong urge to write that she has never felt before, and wonders whether she perhaps may now "find herself in her work" (ib. 196). The inspiration and energy for writing comes from her inner depths as she feels herself to be self-sufficient (ib. 193). The mind and the body of the author are here depicted as balancing and nourishing each other, thus forming one dynamic whole. This entry is a good example of self-conscious embodied subjectivity in the diary of Aino Kallas, displaying creative female agency. As Aino Kallas considers her situation during her first pregnancy quite thoroughly, weighing different aspects of her situation, the extract can be looked upon as an important manifestation of the author's subjectivity, conveying not the hopes of the author for an ideal frame of mind but a reflection of what the author felt she was actually experiencing.[10]

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> Plato's *Timeus* speaks of a *chora*, receptacle, unnamable, improbable, hybrid, anterior to naming, to the One, to the father, and consequently, maternally connoted to such an extent that it merits 'not even the rank of syllable.'
>
> (Julia Kristeva, Desire in Language, 133.)

The diary of Virginia Woolf can be characterized by a covert sense of embodiment that is revealed to the reader as an after-taste of a kind, an inkling beyond the text of an identity being formed and emerging nonverbally. I would argue that in many instances where Aino Kallas and Anaïs Nin write about the body in their diaries, they also write it,

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[10] The representation of the relationship between creativity and pregnancy in the diary of Aino Kallas, however, changes over time. The birth and death of the fourth child unleashes in Aino Kallas a deep sense of guilt and an understanding of the incompatibility of motherhood and artistic creativity (I have discussed this episode in detail in "Representations of Woman Writer's Identity in A Writer's Diary of Virginia Woolf and the Diaries of Aino Kallas". *Interlitteraria* No 6 (2001), 284–300, 297–8). The diary records for the period of expecting the fifth child, when Aino Kallas frequently complains about lack of energy for any brain activity that she attributes to her physical situation, resulting in strong mind-body opposition absent in from diaristc records of her previous pregnancies, in my opinion, display clear influences of Weininger's thought.

making subjectivity's embodiment more visible for the reader. Embodiment in Woolf's diary exits in a dispersed and fluid format that cannot be beheld visually. Kristeva's ideas about the symbolic and semiotic element in language and the role of *chora,* "the unnamable, unspeakable corporeality of the inextricably tangled mother/child dyad which makes the semiotic possible" (Grosz 1992: 195) in the process of signification, offers a potential framework for foregrounding aspects of Woolf's diary that defy an analysis within the 'inscribed body' tradition.

Kristeva describes the process of body emerging from language at the point where "the symbolic covering cracks"(Kristeva 1980: 162). What comes forth is "instinctual drive, riding up to destroy any guarantees, any beliefs, any protection, including those comprised by father or professor" (ib.). What follows is "an aimless drifting, restoring [the speaker] to everything that is being shattered." By "rejecting what is established and opening up an infinite abyss where there are no more words," the process "opens [the speaker] up to jouissance that few suspect even existed" (ib. 162–3). Via jouissance and via "fuzzy words that are more throbbing than meaning, the other which is heterogeneous" emerges. (Ib. 163). "This heterogeneous object," Kristeva maintains,

> is a body that invites me to identify with it (woman, child, androgyne?) and immediately forbids an identification: it is not me, it is non-me in me, beside me, outside of me, where the me becomes lost. /…/ A body, a text that bounces back to me echoes of a territory that I have lost but that I am seeking within the blackness of dreams in Bulgarian, French, Russian, Chinese tones, invocations, lifting up the dismembered, sleeping body. Territory of the mother. What I am saying to you is that if this heterogeneous body, this risky text provide meaning, identity, and jouissance, they do so in a completely different way than a 'Name-of the-Father' (ib. 163).

This is Kristeva's speaking subject that is an embodied subject. The subject 'speaks' via the tension created by the drive force between the symbolic and the semiotic element in language, the drive involving "pre-Oedipal semiotic functions and energy discharges that connect and orient the body to the mother" (Kristeva 1984: 95). Kelly Oliver

has pointed out that while in Kristeva's thought "all signification discharges bodily drives, they make their way into language via the semiotic element of signification" (Oliver 1997: xvi). The drives that are "pivot[s] between 'soma' and 'psyche', between biology and representation" (Kristeva 1995: 30) open up a new space, an unnamable space that she evokes under the guise of an abyss, a lost territory sought again, the territory of the mother. This elusive territory, circling nonetheless on the edge of consciousness, simultaneously denies and provides identity and meaning. What Kristeva here seems to be articulating, is that the body in language, the preverbal, the maternal, might be graspable after all in its own terms. That space, territory of the mother is different order (a non-order) of meaning from the Lacanian 'Name-of-the-Father.' Kristeva might also be referring here (as she does much more explicitly in her essay "Stabat Mater"), to the possibility of writing and reading the maternal, that within psychoanalytic theory has largely remained an impossibility (see Hirsch 1992: 252–253, Oliver 1993: 188). For her, however, the maternal is not identifiable with "the position and role of a subject, for it is a process without subject" (Gross 1990: 95), "an impossible syllogism" (Kristeva 1980: 237).

Further, the maternal, underlying the semiotic element of signification, is no more accessible to women than to men, a position in Kristeva's thought that has often prompted accusations of anti-feminism, of "shifting the problematic from an analysis of sexual difference to that of a sexual differentiation within each individual, male of female" (Grosz 1992: 199). Considering the position Kristeva took in the psyche & po interview as well as her definition of woman as "that which cannot be represented, which is not said, what remains above and beyond nomenclatures and ideologies" (Kristeva 1981:132), which bears remarkable similarities with the "territory of the mother" (Kristeva 1980: 163) I suggest that a possibility for gendered/sexed treatment of language and meaning seems to emerge from Kristeva's thought.

In a well-known section of her *A Room of One's Own* (London/ New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1929), discussing what can be called a woman's poetics of writing, Virginia Woolf evokes a space exclusively for women where meaning can take on new connotations, depths and reflections that cannot form in the presence of men. Woman's words "form themselves" (Woolf 1929: 84) in half-light or

dimness evading any masculine presence "when women are alone, unlit by the capricious and coloured light of the other sex" (ib.). The voice that Woolf refers to is here not one that is lost and in the process of regaining a presence, but rather a new voice that has not sounded before. An important quality of that voice or speech is its non-linguistic unutterable content: Woolf refers to "unrecorded gestures" (ib.) and "half-said, hardly syllabled" (ib.) words, reminiscent of Kristeva's "fuzzy words that are more throbbing than meaning" (Kristeva 1980: 163) and her notion of the *chora* that "merits 'not even the rank of syllable'" (ib. 133). Much of *Room of One's Own* is dedicated to an attempt publicly to reconstruct the tradition of women writers and to show the necessity of thinking back through our mothers. In the section where Woolf elaborates her idea of woman's writing, the emphasis shifts to the preconditions of such writing, from conscious verbally expressed thought to semi-unconscious cognition existing more corporeally than linguistically. The importance of such a basis of existence, or, as Virginia Woolf herself puts it, "a bowl that one fills and fills and fills" (Woolf 1985: 64) can be grasped from Woolf's report of her (two) earliest memories. The one narrated first is "of red and purple flowers on a black ground — my mother's dress" while the child is on her mother's lap (ib. 64). The second is

> of lying half asleep, half awake, in bed in the nursery at St. Ives. It is of hearing the waves breaking, one, two, one, two, and sending a splash of water over the beach; and then breaking, one, two, one two, behind a yellow blind. It is of lying and hearing this splash and seeing this light, and feeling, it is almost impossible that I should be here; of feeling the purest ecstasy I can conceive (ib. 64).

Woolf's two memories are tied to each other as if with an umbilical cord: the memory of lying half asleep feeding the memory of Virginia on her mother's lap. Woolf's explicit mention of her mother in the first memory further emphasizes the maternal aspect of the second; the half-consciously perceiving child's surroundings (dim light, dim rhythmical sound of the waves resembling the sound of heartbeat) quite strongly evoke the image of the womb. Although Woolf also foreground sthe visual (seeing the light and flowers on mother's) and auditory (hearing the sound of the waves) aspect of the memory, the feeling both of sitting on mother's lap and feeling "the purest ecstacy"

are both primarily embodied memories; that is, memories that can be accessed via nonverbal, bodily faculties of subjectivity, in a space "anterior to naming" (Kristeva 1980: 133).

Spaces that provide primary creative nourishment and vital life energy that qualify as maternal spaces figure importantly in two very important aspects of Woolf's texts: her poetics of women's writing and the poetics of writing her self. The diary that Woolf kept more or less daily from the age of 15 until her death was for her an important and intimate textual space that she conceptualized as "loose knit, elastic, resembling a capacious hold-all, in which one flings a mass of odds & ends without looking them through" (Woolf 1977: 266).

The use of the phrase "capacious hold-all" offers a possible key to Woolf's diary, highlighting various layers and modes of expression that it may contain or imply. The level most clearly visible to the reader is the diary as a life-long daily record of a woman of letters, providing a chronological record of her literary *oeuvre* as a whole. In this public aspect, Virginia Woolf as a diarist can be said to resemble her father, an outstanding Victorian man of letters. However, there is another side to the diary, one that seems mostly (or most fully) to speak to the author herself, of "something beat[ing] fiercely close to [her] ... a general sense of the poetry of existence overcom[ing her], often connected with the sea & St Ives" (Woolf 1978: 246). In my opinion, not only the above quoted extract but the general mood, lacking a definite form and defying formulation and conceptualization, can be traced back to Woolf's first memories and the maternal space as the basis of her existence. This is revealed to the reader most perceivably through the rhythmic flow of the diary and its occasional modifications, emerging in a few passages, suddenly taking over and rupturing the visible chronological daily course of the diaristic text.

In August 18, 1921, confined to bed and forbidden to read and write, Woolf (partly ignoring the doctor's wishes) embarks on an imaginative walk through Firle woods in her diary and on "the dusty road, as [she] grounds [her] pedals, [her] story would begin telling itself, & some bout of poetry after dinner, half read, half lived, as if the flesh were dissolved & through it the flowers burst red & white (Woolf 1978: 133). Functioning as an important clue to Woolf's understanding of (female) subjectivity, this mood also flaunts itself in a passage from August 22, 1922, when Woolf complains upon the visit of a friend, Sydney Waterlow, of having "to get out of life" (ib.

193). Waterlow's presence forces her to "become externalized, all at one point, not having to draw upon the scattered part's of one's character, living in the brain." (Ib.) Now she has to become "Virginia" but when she writes she's "merely a sensibility" (ib.). "Sometimes I like being Virginia" (ib.), Woolf says, "but only when I'm scattered & various & gregarious" (ib.). Concretely manifestable subjectivity seems, for Woolf, to have its origins in the mind. However, in her self-perception, she does not locate herself in the brain/mind. What perceives herself as being, in fact, defies definition as well as grammar. "Scattered & various & gregarious" (ib. 193), flowers burst[ing] red & white" through her "dissolved flesh" (ib. 133), she has come to a "heterogeneous object [that] is a body that invit[ing her] to identify with it and immediately forbids an identification: it is not [her], it is non-[her] in [her], beside [her], outside of [her], where [she] becomes lost (Kristeva 1980: 162).

* * *

> A woman's body, with its thousand and one thresholds of ardor /.../ will make the old single-grooved mother tongue reverberate with more than one language.
> (Hélène Cixous, "The Laugh of the Medusa", 342.)

"Where is she," asks Hélène Cixous in the opening line of "Sorties." (Cixous 1996: 63). In "The Laugh of the Medusa," she asserts rebelliously: "Woman must put herself into the text — as into the world and into history — by her own movement" (Cixous 1991: 334). It is in these two partially overlapping texts that Cixous articulates her notion of *écriture féminine* (feminine writing), a concept that has received both solid support for highlighting a poetics "expressing/ creating a feminine libidinal economy" (Oliver 1993: 174) as well as severe criticism for an essentialist slant, for "defining feminine textuality as spontaneous outpouring of the female body" (Felski 1989: 36). What is important for Cixous is the possibility of "exceeding the binary oppositions that currently structure our thinking and thus create new modes of relations between subject and object, [and] self and other" (Sellers 1996: 5).

For Cixous, woman can put herself into the text only by returning to her body and making it heard, so that the "immense resources of the

unconscious will spring forth" (Cixous 1991: 338). *Écriture féminine* as bodily writing is characterized most broadly by two interweaving aspects. First, women must rediscover their sexual specificity and their female libidinal economy. Cixous considers this to be extremely diverse, marveling at the "infinite richness of their individual constitutions" (ib. 334) that makes it impossible to talk about "a female sexuality, uniform, homogenous, classifiable into codes — any more than [one] can talk about one unconscious resembling another" (ib.). A partial counterargument to the charge of essentialism is that Cixous does not limit *écriture féminine* only to women: "The fact that a piece of writing is signed with a man's name does not in itself exclude femininity" (Cixous 1981: 52), because of the bisexual nature of both men and women. Bisexuality, for Cixous, is entailed in the "multiplication of the effects of the inscription of desire, over all parts of my body and the other body" (Cixous 1991: 341). Potentially bisexuality can be present in both men and women but "for historico-cultural reasons, it is women who are opening up and benefiting from this vatic bisexuality" (ib. 341) as most men are likely to be imprisoned in "glorious phallic monosexuality" (ib.). Second, what gives *écriture féminine* a new dimension is rethinking "the relation borne to the child" (Cixous 1996: 88) and the woman as mother (ib. 93). Cixous voices a call to "get out of the dialectic that claims that the child is parents' death" (ib. 89) and proposes a position where the child for the woman is an other without violence that "inscribes in the body the good possibility of an alteration" (ib.). It seems that Cixous is referring both to the actual experience of pregnancy and the bodily potential for it, feeding woman's creative imagination. In every woman there is, according to Cixous, something of the 'good mother' who exists outside the patriarchal institution of motherhood, "repairing and feeding, resisting separation" (ib. 93). If Cixous considers it possible for a man to experience sexuality outside the narrow bounds of male sexuality and to be capable of producing *écriture féminine*, her discussion of the maternal dimension of woman's being does not seem to include men. Would it be correct to assume, then, that women are, or should discover themselves as being, closer to bodily or feminine writing than men are?

Sexual difference and writing (or creativity in general) is a topic that occasionally surfaces already in the early diary of Anaïs Nin: "I speak as a writer, then, not as a woman. Because, again, I want the

woman to serve the creator, body and soul" (Nin 1985: 238), Nin writes in October 1929, commenting on her "idea of perfection" (ib.) in life. Such a position seems to suggest that for Nin, writing is not a realm naturally fitted for woman('s role in life). However, at some point Nin comes to reevaluate the sexual difference in writing quite thoroughly. This is perhaps most clearly visible in her diary entries from August 1937, made after a series of conversations with Henry Miller and Lawrence Durrell. Rethinking some points of "the theories of art" discussed earlier, she now comes to an understanding that woman "never created directly, except though a man and was never able to create as a woman" (Nin 1967: 233). Creating art is no longer a gender neutral activity for Nin, on the contrary, she emphasizes that "woman's creation, far from being like man's must be exactly like her creation of children, that it must come out of her own blood, englobed by her womb, nourished with her own milk" (ib. 233).

In my opinion, there is quite a strong parallel between Nin's position and Cixous' claim, "it is time for the woman to displace existing 'within' man's discourse, explode it, overturn it, grab it, make it hers, take it into the woman's mouth" (Nin 1991: 343, 1996: 95). As for Cixous, writing is for Nin an embodied activity that extensively draws on the maternal capacities of the woman. Nin foregrounds the need for woman's writing to "be of human creation, of flesh, different from man's abstraction" (Nin 1967: 234) and denies the use of distance, objectivity and solitude as necessary preconditions for creating art. What matters for her is the immediacy of writing, the close relation between experience (including the inmost bodily experience) and writing.

Like Cixous, who proposes that "the act of writing is equivalent to masculine masturbation (and so the woman who writes cuts herself out the paper penis" (Cixous 1991: 340)[11], Nin claims that "most women painted and wrote nothing but imitations of phalluses and no womb anywhere" (Nin 1967: 235). "The woman artist," says Nin,

> has to create something different from man. Man created a world cut off from nature. Woman has to

[11] For Cixous, however this is one of the three possibilities of disposing of sexual difference in writing: the other two are that all writing "to the extent that it materializes, is feminine" (1991: 340) or that writing is "bisexual, hence neuter" (ib. 340).

> create within the mysteries, storms, terrors, the infernos of sex, the battle against abstractions and art. Woman wants to destroy aloneness, recover the original paradise. The art of woman must be born in the wombcells of the mind (ib. 234).

Both Nin and Cixous emphasize that creation is not woman's singular process; it does not happen in solitude, does not require separation, but rather is always relational: "the woman was born mother, mistress, wife, sister, she was born to represent union, communion, communication" (ib.), she is "the desire that gives, a love that rejoices in the exchange that it multiplies" (Cixous 1991: 348).

The passages of Nin's diary quoted above have received quite extensive critical attention. In a well-known article titled "The Music of the Womb", Sharon Spencer highlights the role of these sections in Nin's diary as articulating "a philosophy of writing that would serve her specific needs as a woman writer" (1989: 161). Spencer offers a thorough discussion of Nin's feminine poetics in relation to her fiction, hardly paying any attention to her diary beyond the extracts that contain the poetics. In my view such a discussion of Nin's poetic paradigm in some sense turns it against itself. A reading of Nin's formulation of her poetic credo in the context of the conversation that triggered Nin's thoughts of the subject makes visible the centrality of Nin's diary in it[12]. The discussion seems to be focusing on Nin's diaristic practices and the desired relationship between her diary and her fiction. Durrell and Miller suggest that in order to create works of art with capital A (such as, for example, a new *Hamlet*), Nin needs to distance herself from her more personal writing. Formulating rather clearly her position Nin claims that by doing this she would "break the umbilical connection" (Nin 1967: 232). Claiming that she "is not interested in fiction" but wants "faithfulness" (ib. 233) instead, Nin considers it of ultimate importance that her work "must be the closest to the life flow" (ib. 235).

The extent to which Nin appears to be disturbed and even panicky by the attack that Miller and Lawrence launch on her diary, however,

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[12] Helen Tookey goes even further, maintaining that the image of the womb was used by Nin primarily for a conceptualization of her diaristic practices as a feminine form of writing and should be applied to the rest of Nin's writing with reservations (see Tookey 154–161).

suggests that for Nin, there is more at stake here than merely the issue of art. It is well known that Nin was almost obsessively devoted to her diary, dependent on it both psychologically, as a prime locus for the manifestation and development of her subjectivity, and physically, as a habitual activity of writing. A few years earlier when Otto Rank asked Nin to give up her journal Nin viewed it as a violation but consented, commenting a few months later how she started "wanting her diary as one wants opium. I wanted nothing else but the diary, to rest upon, as in a womb" (Nin 1992: 306). Although Rank's prohibition seemed to have lasted for a couple of months, Nin soon resumed her diary keeping with the usual intensity and the unexpurgated version of her diary makes one wonder if she ever did give it up as she claimed to have done. Nin herself quite explicitly notes that the diary is a safe maternal space where her subjectivity's unhindered textual flow forms a kind of firewall between Nin's actual lived experience and her representation of it.

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Of the three women writers discussed here, the diary certainly played the most crucial life in Nin's life. Her addictive attachment to the diary and her envisioning the diary as a maternal space, however, offers an important insight into the diary-keeping practices of Aino Kallas and Virginia Woolf as well. Striving for an understanding of herself as an artist in her diary during her pregnancies and new motherhood, Aino Kallas extends the reproductive state of her being to a creative productivity with various degrees of success during different pregnancies. The maternal space in her diary is simultaneously the textual representation of pregnancy and motherhood and the metaphorization of her situation to facilitate her as a woman artist. Revealing a 'maternal voice' alongside the more overt and visible 'paternal voice' of a woman of letters, Virginia Woolf's diary operates as a web of levels of meaning. Characterized by a high degree of reticence in personal matters, the diary's more intimate dimension is mostly implied in the overall impression of another 'voice' sounding from behind the daily discourse. Conceptualized in *A Room of One's Own* and elaborated via a personal reflection in "A Sketch of the Past," the maternal space is for Woolf the starting point of woman's writing. While Nin's metaphor for the ultimate origin of woman's

writing seems most explicitly to entail a maternal space — the womb — her 'poetics of feminine writing' concerns primarily her diary, a mode of writing for Nin that exceeds the boundaries of art and functions as a vital prop for the author's subjectivity. This function, although not so explicitly manifested, is also characteristic of the diary of Aino Kallas and Virginia Woolf, explaining their life-long need to keep the diary going along many other different types of writing that they practiced.

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Moving Love. The Semiotics of a Passion on the Basis of Francesco Petrarca's *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*

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Introduction

A close reading of Francesco Petrarca's *Rerum Vulgarium Fragmenta*, to which I will refer in what follows as the *Canzoniere*, reveals the employment of a very clear poetical device: the object of poetry is the poet's **state** of mind, which is defined in the text as "love", but this state is represented **dynamically**. This observation will not lead me to claim that the lyrical *I* in the *Canzoniere* goes through different factual stages of love (falling in love, love relationship, and so on) because, as Roberto Mercuri writes, "the lyrical narration is not the story of events, but the story of sentiments, of emotional reactions" (Mercuri 2003: 77)[1]. The actual nature of love does not change much throughout the text, on the contrary, everything is there from the beginning, because love in the *Canzoniere* always remains a **beginning**, which does not develop any further. The dynamical aspect of love refers rather to the way in which the space of that passion is described in the *Canzoniere* as a **scenario** which unravels itself on a stage where something moves and something functions as a place of departure or destination for the movement.

The following attempt to dissect the dynamics of love in the *Canzoniere* will take the form of a close semiotical analysis of Petrarca's

[1] "il racconto lirico è la storia non degli avvenimenti, ma dei sentimenti, delle reazioni emotive"

text. I will use as theoretical support the semiotics of passions developed by Algirdas Greimas and his research group in the early nineties.

The emergence of passion

The first stage of *Canzoniere*'s love dynamics is a movement from the exterior world to the inner world of the lyrical *I*. For the passion to emerge we need to have an object and a place which could contain that object. The origin of passion can therefore be seen as making room for the object, summoning a place, which could function as a destination for the object's movement. This is the precondition for the formation of an impassioned subject, only in this way a certain passional scenario can be drawn from the preceding shapeless "fluctuations of tension" (Greimas, Fontanille 1993: 14).

Let us see how this first movement is represented in Petrarca's poetry. The place of departure are Laura's **eyes**, the place of destination is the **heart** of the lyrical *I*. Laura's eyes are the "sun", "stars" or "burning fires", their main property is a very intense, blinding light. But what is it that departs from there? Laura's eyes are the place, "nest" (*nido*) or "shelter" (*albergo*) to *Amor* who obviously appears as the first subject in the love scenario and whom we can identify with the "Sender" of the Greimasian theory of narrative functions. It is no accident that in the first part of the *Canzoniere* Amor is always addressed with the words "my Lord" (*mio Signore*). From Laura's eyes "arrows" or "rays" are sent out, but they are conveyors rather than the object itself. While looking at what arrives at the destination, that is, into the heart of the lyrical *I*, one can find different things in the poetry of the *Canzoniere*: Laura's eyes and their light, or metaphorical equivalents of Laura derived from her name such as "laurel" (*lauro*) and "air" (*l'aura*), sometimes Amor himself. This variety does not have any meaning in the love dynamics, the important thing is that the movement has taken place and something has arrived at the destination. Now the heart of the lirycal *I* is itself a "nest" and a "shelter" for the passional object. Anyway, this first movement does not at all activate in Petrarca's poetry metaphors of appropriation based on the relation between the containing and the contained elements; on the contrary, the logic of **conquest** and **imprisonment** is at work here, and the condition of the impassioned

subject is constantly defined in the *Canzionere* as a "prison". The intruder takes possession of the place, it is a thought which "rules what is inside" (*ché tèn di me quel d'entro*, XXIII, 20). This situation is represented by Petrarca with a long series of binding images: "strings", "ribbons", "branches", "hooks", "reins", "padlocks", "traps" and so on.

The first movement succeeds because the eyes of the lyrical *I* let arrows and rays pass, they are not "armed" enough to make war with Amor. At this point Petrarca uses the word "**tralucere**", which can be literally translated as "let the light pass"; in the same way as what comes from the outside gets inside, what is inside can be seen from the outside: "what is in my heart my eyes make clear"[2]. The whole dynamics evolves here at the level of the properties of **light**. Laura's eyes are, in their capacity as a source of blinding light, impenetrable, contrary to the impassioned *I*, she always has "defences well in place/ against the bow Love draws but draws in vain"[3]. From Laura's eyes the movement can only begin, because she is self-sufficient, the only light for Laura is her own light and the mirror, the "enemy" of the lyrical *I*, closes Laura's dynamics of light in the *Canzoniere*. The images of **penetrability** and **impenetrability** are doubled by Petrarca with the images of **destructibility** and **indestructibility**: the heart of the lyrical *I* is made of "wood", which burns to ashes, "wax" and "snow", which melt, while the material of which Laura's heart and body are made are "marble", "diamond", "enamel", "ice".

The intense light and the impenetrability of Laura's eyes are the reasons why one can look into them only from a distance. Petrarca writes about metaphorical "shady places" (*luoghi tenebrosi*) and "late hours" (*ore tarde*), which could function as "refuge" (*schermo*) to protect against the light of Laura's eyes (XIX, 9–11). Therefore, a characteristic element of *Canzoniere*'s poetics is the temporal or spatial **separation** from the object of love. The temporal separation is naturally evident in **memory**, the most fundamental narrative device in the *Canzoniere*; for instance, the continuous recollections of the first meeting with Laura cause a weakening of her light and allow the lyrical *I* to look at her. The spatial separation also appears through memory, because in the *Canzoniere* memories are often actualized

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2 "e 'l cor negli occhi et ne la fronte ò scritto" (LXXVI, 11)

3 "gli schermi sempre accorti / contra l'arco d'Amor" (XLIV, 10–11)

through the lyrical *I*'s visits to places, where Laura has been. These moments are essentially the only ones when the relations with the object of love find their place in the external world. The places bear traces of Laura, as the soil bears signs of her body, which walked or lay on it; she is still there as Amor, light, air or laurel. This is the theme of the famous song CXXVI:

> Clear, fresh and pleasant water
> in which she laid her limbs,
> the only lady ever on my mind[4]

But exteriority is only apparent also in these cases, the lyrical *I* is in fact simply projecting outside his own inner passional state, which is based, as I attempted to show, on the relation between a place and the entities, which inhabit it as traces of an absence. This appears clearly at the end of the cited song, where the condition of the lyrical *I* is pictured as a departure from "things as they really are" (*immagine vera*, 60), which engenders doubt and reflection:

> 'How, when did I come here?'
> thinking myself in heaven, not where I was.
> And now I know I love
> this grass so much I find peace nowhere else[5]

Separation, a fundamental element in Petrarca's poetry, means that after the first movement in love's dynamics, when Laura has taken her place in the heart of the impassioned *I*, love will not function as an external relation any more. That is why that original moment always recurs, although it is presented in different ways. Using Greimas's terminology we could say that love has an incoactive character in the *Canzoniere*, it is and always remains a beginning (Greimas, Fontanille 1993: 5). The stage for the representation of the passion is already from that original moment the inner world of the lyrical *I*.

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[4] "Chiare fresche e dolci acque, / ove le belle membra / pose colei che sola a me par donna" (CXXVI, 1–3)

[5] "Qui come venn'io, o quando?; / credendo esser in ciel, non là dov'era. / Da indi in qua mi piace / questa herba sí, ch'altrove non ò pace" (CXXVI 62–65)

Love as a scenario

The first movement, by sketching the outlines of the passion, changes the lyrical *I* into an **operative subject**, who activates himself in the attempt to understand what has happened, because "for signification to occur and for tensity to be stabilized, the only solution for the operative subject is to *categorize the loss of the object*" (ib.15). This means that if, at the beginning, the results of the first movement appeared as "singular and irreducibly individual", the subject discovers now a "network of contrasts" and "internal negations", the signs of the absence which gives meaning to his life. This activity of giving meaning takes the form of the **projection of a passional scenario**. We do not face any longer a subject and an object, whose relations take place within the framework of the exterior world, but meaning relations, which are performed on an inner stage, where both the subject and the object split and give birth to a complex relational structure. We could say that if the object, that is, Laura, semanticized the subject, determining the tone of his passion, the lyrical *I* projects a syntactical equivalent of that passion. To characterize this syntax I will employ the Greimasian **semiotic square**.[6] The first position in the square is that of the "realized *I*", the subject in the role of actant (ib. 19–25). In the *Canzoniere* we find here that big heart which receives the object of love, we will call it therefore the **subject of love**:

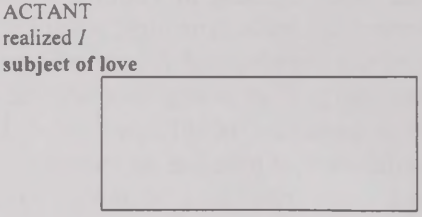

Figure 1

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[6] By choosing this device I will not argue that the square could describe some kind of profound structure of semiosis. I am using the square only as an operational device to deal with one particular case. The original introduction of the square is to be found in Greimas (1970), I will refer to the development of the idea in (Greimas 1993).

Love's scenario discloses itself with the formation of the realized *I* due to the above mentioned first movement, which is followed or, to be more exact, is accompanied, by a second movement through which a virtual *I* emerges. The occupation of the lyrical *I*'s heart by the object of love causes the departure of all the other objects, which resided in the inner world of the subject. This departure is strongly expressed in the *Canzoniere* as an "evacuation" (the original Italian verb is *sgombrare*), as for instance in sonnet XI, where the object of love is described as the "desire I had/ driving all other wishes from my heart"[7]. Giacomo Leopardi, "the 19th-century Petrarca", wrote about the same thing very effectively in his poem "The Dominant Thought", where he compares the thought of the beloved to a high column, which grows in the impassioned heart of the poet as a tower in an empty field (Leopardi, 1993: 209–210). In the *Canzoniere* we witness to the departure of "thoughts", "images" and "wishes", passion does not stop at the level of feelings but embraces will, imagination and the intellect. The second movement of love dynamics consists therefore of the lyrical *I* losing, or stealing, or forgetting himself: "I was lost" (*io perdei me stesso*, CLXXV, 2), "I leave myself behind" (*a me stesso m'involo*, CLXIX, 3), "you forget yourself and where you are" (*tu c'hai posto te stesso in oblio*, CCXLII, 9). As a result, "my thoughts fight with themselves" (*da me son fatti i miei pensier' diversi*, XXIX, 36). The protagonist of sestina CCXIV is the "soul" (*anima*), which stands for the complexity of the subject's inner world and is filled with "what is high and new" (*cose altere e nove*, 2) up to the moment when it enters a "lovely wood" (*un bel bosco*, 6)[8], where it finds a "flower, born into the same wood/ the day before" (*un tenero fior nato in quel bosco / il giorno avanti*, 7–8). Since it is impossible to approach the flower with a "free soul" (*anima sciolta*, 9), the soul loses its freedom in the wood. At the end of the sestina Petrarca poses "new questions"[9], which arise from the new situation of his lyrical *I*:

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[7] "il gran desio ch'ogni altra voglia dentr'al cor mi sgombra" (XI, 3–4)

[8] It is interesting to note here the clear distinction from Dante's "wild forest" ("selva selvaggia"), because it points to the changes in the poetics of Petrarca in comparison with that of the author of the Divine Comedy.

[9] In the "novelty" of the question is contained *in nuce* the novelty of Petrarca's poetry, which has been described as a "poetics of doubt" (Mercuri 2003: 92).

What is in me to prize? Am I off course?
Is my soul free? Or prisoned in the wood?[10]

The Petrarchan doubtful position, which can be opposed to Dante's, emerges clearly at the other extreme from the comparison with the furious Orlando's madness in the poem by Ariosto. Love causes the departure of Orlando's reason (*senno*) that Astolfo must bring back from the Moon. Orlando, like Petrarca's lyrical subject has lost himself, but Orlando's loss is much more radical, because reason is completely excluded from the passional dynamics.[11] In the *Canzioniere*, on the contrary, reason is, in a sense, still there; although it has been expelled by the realized *I*, it continues to inhabit the inner stage in a virtual shape. Returning to Greimas, one can find at this point the figure of the negactant (complement of the actant), which I will name for the *Canzoniere* the **subject of reason** as opposed to the subject of love. The subject of reason is the virtualized *I*, who waits for the moment of his realization and is engaged in a struggle to anticipate it.

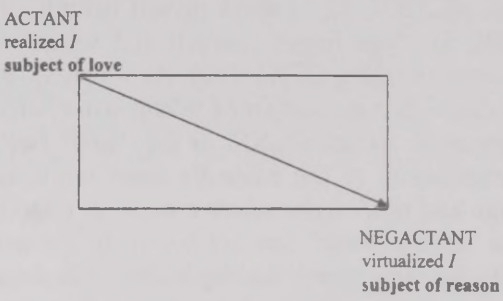

Figure 2

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[10] "Or ecco in parte le question' mie nove: / s'alcun pregio in me vive, o 'n tutto è corso, / o l'alma sciolta, o ritenuta al bosco" (CCXIV, 37–39).

[11] The interrelation between the destruction of oneself caused by love and madness is clearly expressed in this passage of the *Orlando Furioso*: "Let him haste his feet to disengage/ nor lime his wings, whom love has made a prize;/ for love, in fine, is nought but phrensied rage,/ by universal suffrage of the wise:/ and albeit some may show themselves more sage/ the Roland, they but sin in other guise./ For, what proves folly more than on this shelf,/ thus, for another, to destroy oneself" (*Chi mette il piè su l'amorosa pania, / cerchi ritrarlo, e non v'inveschi l'ale; che non è in somma amor, se non insania, / a giudizio de' savi universale: /.../ E quale è di pazzia segno più espresso / che, per altri voler, perder se stesso*. XXIV, 1)

A recurring image (movement) related to the subject of reason in the *Canzoniere* is the "stepping aside" from one's life (again a parallel with Dante) and the entrance into a "labyrinth"; thoughts, images and wishes are therefore described as "wandering", "rambling". But it would be wrong to deduce that Petrarca writes about a moral fault, and the difference from Dante is particularly marked at this point. Although, as I have already attempted to show, Petrarca describes the departure of reason from the subject of love as an oblivion of the self, this, however, does not mean that we should interpret it as the loss of the personal identity of the lyrical *I*. On the contrary, Petrarca's paradox lies exactly in the fact that for the lyrical *I* of the *Canzoniere* the loss of himself goes together with the finding of himself. The love scenario proposed in Figure 2, by splitting the lyrical *I* into two different subjects, offers the points to which these two different identities can be fixed. The new identity of the subject of love is stressed in the *Canzoniere* by the unusual frequency in the use of the word "solo" in his two meanings of "only" and "alone".[12] The finding of oneself, which goes together with the loss of oneself is fully developed in the following passage of sonnet CLXIX:

> Full of that strong desire which sunders me
> from other men, walking this world alone,
> I leave myself behind from time to time[13]

In sonet CCXCII Laura's qualities are described as the power

> which rapt me from my very being once
> and made me out of multitudes unique.[14]

We find in these two lines respectively the division (*diviso*) of the subject with the consequent loss of himself and the emergence of a

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[12] Particularly frequent are the combinations "only I" ("solo io", "io solo") and "only to me" ("solo a me").

[13] "Pien d'un vago penser [Laura] che me desvia / da tutti gli altri, et fammi al mondo ir solo, / ad or ad ora a me stesso m'involo" (1–3)

[14] "m'avean sì da me stesso diviso / et fatto singular da l'altra gente" (3–4)

new self-identity (*fatto singular*). That is why Laura is also a "mirror"[15], which shows to the subject of love who he is:

> That frail life still inhabiting my body
> was obviously the gift of your bright eyes
> and the angelic sweetness of your voice.
> My being comes from them, I recognise[16]

Throughout the whole *Canzoniere* the reader experiences the dialectical confrontation between the two avatars of the lyrical *I*, the subject of love and the subject of reason. That is why, depending on the choice of the point of departure and the point of destination, the same movement can acquire different meanings in the text. We will name the movements related to the above mentioned confrontation the **flight** and the **quest**, triggered by the underlying forces of repulsion and attraction.[17] When the flight has as its point of departure the subject of love, it takes the shape of withdrawal from the object of love (Laura's blinding eyes) and a search for the refuge by the subject of reason, which is able to draw clear perceptual and intellectual borders.[18] When, on the other hand, the flight begins from the subject of reason, it takes the shape of what has been described here as the loss of himself, the destination is love as the place where distinctions are erased and they blend:

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[15] For instance in the CCCXII sonet Laura is said to have been the only light and mirror to the eyes of the lyrical *I* (*sola agli occhi miei fu lume e speglio*, 11)

[16] "La fraile vita ch'ancor meco alberga, / fu de' begli occhi vostri aperto dono, / et de la voce angelica soave. / Da lor conosco l'esser ov'io sono" (LXIII, 5–8)

[17] In sonnet CLXXVIII the opposite action of the two forces is described in this way: "Love spurs and at the same time reins me in,/ freezes and burns, assures and frightens me,/ welcomes and scorns, calls me, drives me away,/ keeping me now in hope and now in pain" (*Amor mi sprona in un tempo et affrena, / assecura et spaventa, arde et agghiaccia, / gradisce e sdegna, a sé mi chiama et scaccia, or mi tene in speranza et or in pena*, 1–4)

[18] In these cases Petrarca uses the word "discernere", which literally means "perceive things as separate".

so I rush into fatal solar fire —
her eyes, that is, which give such happiness
they teach Love to ignore all common sense
till reason is extinguished by desire[19]

In Figure 2 it is possible to represent flight as the diagonal movement, which, in the love scenario, links the realized and the virtualized *I*.

When the attention is paid to the quest, it is necessary to focus on the object of love. But when the object is assigned a role on the stage of the love scenario, it becomes itself a subject, because, as Greimas and Fontanille write "it resists, hides from, refuses the subject of the quest, by a sort of projection on the object of the 'obstacles' encountered by the subject" (Greimas, Fontanille 1993: 20). In place of the antactant of the semiotic square, we find the Laura made of diamond or marble, whose eyes are sources of blinding light; she is the object of the quest for the subject of love. For lack of better terms, I will name the antactant "**subject of perdition**", following the tradition. In the Greimasian terminology this subject is actualized, because it is the projected instance that the realized *I* is facing in his quest. The quest of the subject of love is represented in the *Canzoniere* as a movement, which breaks off before arriving at its destination or continues indefinitely without arriving at its destination. The first type of movement is wonderfully exemplified by a recurring episode of the *Canzoniere*, thus narrated in sonnet LXVII:

Love, which was slowly boiling up inside
my soul remembering that hair of gold,
pushed me, and in a stream the grass concealed
I stumbled like somebody falling dead.[20]

The movement breaks off and "she went away" ("ella sparve"), as it is told in the narration of the same episode in sonnet CXC. The second

[19] "così sempre corro al fatal mio sole / degli occhi onde mi vèn tanta dolcezza / che 'l fren de la ragion Amor non prezza, / e chi discerne è vinto da chi vòle." (CXLI, 5–8). Note in the last line of the original text the co-presence of our two subjects ("chi discerne" and "chi vuole").

[20] "Amor, che dentro a l'anima bolliva, / per rimembranza de le trecce bionde / mi spinse, onde in un rio che l'erba asconde / caddi, non già come persona viva" (LXVII, 5–8)

type, continuous movement without destination, is characterized by long, solitary and aimless walks over hills and valleys, frequently illustrated in the *Canzoniere*. Since Laura is her eyes, the movement related to the subject of perdition is the negation of the look, which leaves the searching subject in darkness. At this point, the dialectical logic of flight and quest at the level of the subject of love appears clearly, as Petrarca masterly explains in sonnet CXCIV:

> I seek, and hope to see today, my sun,
>
> which gives such happiness Love always brings
> me back by force to come and look for it:
> till, dazzled, I cannot escape too soon.[21]

At the same time the light of Laura's eyes is what the lyrical *I* seeks and from what he flees. To describe this situation, Petrarca uses as a metaphor in the *Canzionere* the singing of the sirens, which, at the acoustical level, doubles the visual (light) and the tactile (material) proprerties of Laura. It is important to stress that the quest of the subject of love develops through actions, the movement towards the object in this case is a concrete movement. The actions involved are represented as inadequate and clumsy, not corresponding to the virtues of the desired object.

When we focus on the quest of the subject of reason, a question arises: what is its object? The aim of the quest of the subject of reason is surely to overcome his marginalized status, to leave the position of virtuality and gain that of reality, deposing from there the subject of love. This can be done only through a "treatment" of Laura, the object of love, which would make her penetrable by the lyrical *I*. That is certainly what the subject of love also wants, he repeatedly begs Amor to shoot Laura's heart with his arrows, but this does not work. The way to the symmetry of love is barred in the *Canzoniere*, Laura can not become a subject of love herself and love does not overcome its incoative nature throughout the text. In the logic of the *Canzoniere* Laura becomes penetrable only when her meaning for the lyrical *I* changes, which causes a change in the tone of his passion as well.

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[21] "cerco 'l mio sole et spero vederlo oggi. / Nel qual provo dolcezze tante e tali / ch'Amor per forza a lui mi riconduce; / poi sí m'abbaglia che 'l fuggir m'è tardo" (CXCIV, 8–11).

The object of the quest of the subject of reason is not therefore Laura as the subject of love but Laura as the **subject of piety** (*pietas*). In terms of Greimas's semiotic square, I will speak of the negantactant or the potentialized subject, since it is projected by the virtualized *I*. We have now all the elements to complete our scenario:

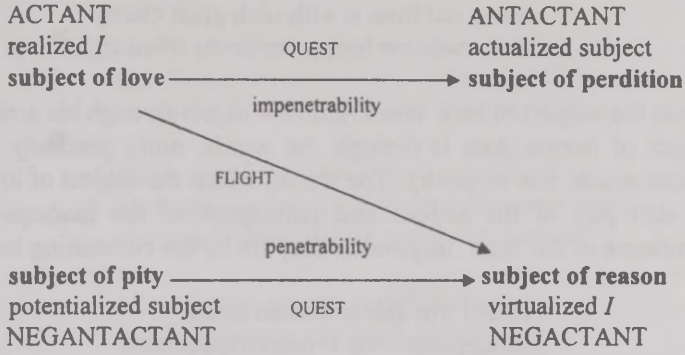

Figure 3

In this way, the subject of piety is opposed to the subject of perdition. It becomes possible to look into Laura's eyes, because their blinding brightness is now veiled by tears and Laura as the subject of pity becomes herself "traslucent":

> My heart was manifest to her bright eyes,
> my deep faith not displeasing any more.[22]

She is now penetrable by words as well:

> my pleasant thoughts and all their ancient load
> I would have emptied into her chaste ear,
>
> and she at last perhaps, with tenderness
> and words of sacred comfort have replied[23].

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[22] "già traluceva a' begli occhi il mio core,/ et l'alta fede non più lor molesta" (CCCXVII, 5–6)

As observed for the lyrical *I*, the light also moves in two directions while passing the subject of piety: what is inside becomes visible from the outside; Laura's brow is like

> a crystalline
> column, and all her thoughts, written therein,
> shone out from it with such great clarity
> they made me happy, made me often sigh.[24]

While the subject of love tries to gain his object through his actions, the subject of reason does it through the words, more precisely through written words, that is, poetry. The words, which the subject of love uses, are also part of his actions and participate of the inadequacy and clumsiness of the latter, inspired as they are by the consuming love:

> Once I was able to restrain desire,
> to keep *madonna* in calm countenance,
> but now no more; you [Love — DM] take away the reins,
> and make me overweening in despair.[25]

It so happens that the desperate soul ventures "well beyond discretion" (*oltra suo stile ella s'aventa*, CCXXXVI, 9). The poetical words have, on the other hand, the requested penetrating strength and make Laura merciful towards the lyrical *I*; the rhymes

> would, as I spoke in my maturer style,
> have broken stones, and made them weep to hear.[26]

There is, anyway, an obvious problem with the claim that I have just made, that is, why we should give the responsibility for the poetical words to the subject of reason and not to the subject of love? At the

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[23] "deposto / in quelle caste orecchie avrei parlando/ de' miei dolci pensier' l'antiqua soma/et ella avrebbe a me forse risposto" (CCCXVII, 9–11).

[24] "una colonna / cristallina, et iv'entro ogni pensero / scritto, et for tralucea sí chiaramente, che mi fea lieto, et sospirar sovente" (CCCXXV, 27–30).

[25] "Solea frenare il mio caldo desire, / per non turbare il bel viso sereno:/ non posso più; di man m'ài tolto il freno, / et l'alma desperando à preso ardire" (CCXXXVI, 5–8)

[26] "con stil canuto avrei fatto parlando/ romper le pietre, et pianger di dolcezza" (CCCIV, 13–14)

moment when Petrarca was writing the *Canzoniere* a whole tradition had already developed about poetical inspiration ignited by love and characteristic of impassionate subjects. But I think we should take seriously the thesis, which is continuously repeated throughout the *Canzoniere*: it is impossible for the lover to find (adequate) words to express love. For instance:

> when I see blazing fires by which I'm burned,
> and shining knots and curls, holding me fast,
> on her left shoulder now, and now her right.
>
> What can I say, when I don't understand?
> By those two lights my poor mind is oppressed,
> and wearied out with so much that is sweet[27]
>
> I have begun so very many rhymes;
> but then my pen, my hand, my intellect
> defeated in their first assault fell back[28]

The subject of love is responsible for these complaints; love is not stimulating to poetical creation, on the contrary, it proves to be an obstacle to it, as is clearly shown in the following passages, where the aphasic situation of the lyrical *I* is described as the direct consequence of love:

> Love heals and wounds me, and with such address,
> that I can scarce recall it, far less say:
> no wit no tongue could tell the truth of this[29]
>
> If only that strict knot
> which Love ties round about my tongue whenever
> my vision dazzles with excess of light

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[27] "vedendo ardere i lumi ond'io m'accendo,/ et folgorare i nodi ond'io son preso,/ or sull'omero dextro et or sul manco./ I' nol posso ridir, ché nol comprendo:/ da ta' due luci è l'intelletto offeso,/ et di tanta dolcezza oppresso e stanco" (CXCVIII, 9–14)

[28] "Più volte incominciai di scriver versi:/ ma la penna et la mano et l'intellecto/ rimaser vinti nel primier assalto" (XX, 12–14)

[29] "Amor con tal dolcezza m'unge et punge,/ ch'i nol so ripensar, nonché ridire:/ ché né 'ngegno né lingua al vero agiunge" (CCXXI, 12–14)

were once untied, I would at last speak up,
and say such strange and unaccustomed words
that all who heard them would be forced to weep[30]

Love and the ability to express it are therefore represented as incompatible in the *Canzoniere*: "he is not burning who has strength to speak"[31]. The subject of love can not possibly find the words to express his condition because he is devoid of all his intellectual faculties, as it is clear in the cited sonnets XX, CXCVIII and CCXXI, where the aphasia the lyrical *I* is experiencing is clearly interrelated with the offences caused to his intellect (*intelletto* or *ingegno*) by love. It is no accident that in another passage of the cited song LXXIII, we find a reference to the death of reason:

so powerful is the wish that drives me on;
and since reason is dead,
that helds the reins, this cannot be withstood.[32]

It will be up to the subject of reason, the place of exile for the intellectual faculties of the lyrical *I* to express the condition of the latter through poetry. His message is safely carried by the *canzone*, a valuable intermediary, which secures the necessary separation of the poetic subject from his addressee.

Reorganizing the scenario: the second part of the *Canzoniere*

I am coming to a fundamental question in the interpretation of the *Canzoniere* as a whole: what is it that makes possible the transition form desire to words in the described passional dynamics? I agree with Roberto Antonelli, who points out Laura's death, the separating

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[30] "solamente quel nodo/ ch'Amor cerconda a la mia lingua quando/ l'umana vista il troppo lume avanza,/ fosse disciolto, i' prenderei baldanza/ di dir parole in quel punto sí nove/ che farian lagrimar che le 'ntendesse;" (LXXIII, 79–84)

[31] "chi pò dir com'egli arde, è 'n picciol foco" (CLXX, 14)

[32] "sì possente è 'l voler che mi trasporta;/ et la ragione è morta,/ che tenea 'l freno, et contrastar nol pote" (LXXIII, 24–26)

episode between the first ("Poems written in the lifetime of *madonna* Laura") and the second part ("Poems written after the death of *madonna* Laura") of the *Canzoniere*. As Antonelli argues, it is clear why in Petrarca's poetics the object of love must die: "until the beloved lives, the self-reflective and narcissistic process, which allow the Word and the Book to *replace* the other pole of love exchange, cannot take place"[33]. In our terms, Laura's death enables the lyrical *I* to split the object of his quest into two different projections: Laura as the subject of perdition and Laura as the subject of piety. This is also presented in the second part of the *Canzoniere* as a movement, a vertical movement: one Laura ascends into heaven, the other sinks into the earth. It is interesting to observe how Petrarca lingers on the consumption of Laura's body. The indestructibility of the subject of perdition, made of marble and diamond, ends with Laura's death. Departing, Laura takes with herself the heart of the lyrical *I*, which functioned as the place of destination for the object of love, but now becomes the moving object itself:

> that face, so dear and sacred, has passed on,
> piercing my heart in passing with her glance;
> she took that heart with her (it was mine once),
> enveloped in the mantle she had worn[34]

The departure of Laura together with his heart "petrifies" the lyrical *I*, he is now "a stone without his heart"[35]. We observe a total inversion, at the moment that the subject of perdition perishes, the lyrical *I* becomes unbreakable. The departure of the conquered and subjected heart makes room for all the thoughts, wishes and images, which were sent away but stayed throughout the representation in the virtual container of the subject of reason. Now that the truth "relieves" (again *sgombrare*) the place from "that sweet mistake" (*quel dolce errore*), they are allowed to return (CXXIX). To emphasise this change Petrarca uses the verb "untie" (*sciogliere*) as a dominant image in the

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[33] "finché la donna è in vita il processo autoriflessivo e narcisistico che permette alla Parola e al Libro di *sostituire* l'altro polo dello scambio amoroso non può verificarsi" (Antonelli, 2003: 57).

[34] "ma passando i dolci occhi al cor m'a fissi: al cor già mio, che seguendo partissi / lei ch'avolto l'avea nel suo bel manto" (CCCXIII, 6–8).

[35] "i' senza cor un sasso" (CCXLIII, 13).

second part of the *Canzoniere* opposed to the binding images, which have already been discussed. To this "freed" lyrical *I* corresponds the heavenly Laura, who is also freed from her destructive characteristics; she can now take the place of the subject of pity: "*post mortem*, all is clear, all is *unfolded*: the poet I don't love, he has not loved, a body or a body(-writing), /.../ but the *spirit* of the body, the *memory* of the body(-writing), the *name* /laura/, the Word"[36]. According to Petrarca, after Laura's death the only thing that remains is her **name**[37], and "my weeping and my pen" (CCCXIII, 4); so poetry can begin.

The shift of emphasis in the passional scenario in the two parts of the *Canzoniere* is clear and Laura's death functions as a discriminating event, but in my opinion this does not mean that we should interpret Petrarca's masterpiece as a journey from the perdition of desire (the first part) to the redemption of the poetical word (the second part). This interpretation would be a reduction of the *Canzoniere*'s complexity to a scheme far too simple. The transition does take place, but it does not imply the setting-out from the projected love scenario. Instead, it can be represented in the semiotical square as a change of positions between the subjects which remain the same. It is then possible to characterize the actantial relations of the second part of the *Canzoniere* as follows:

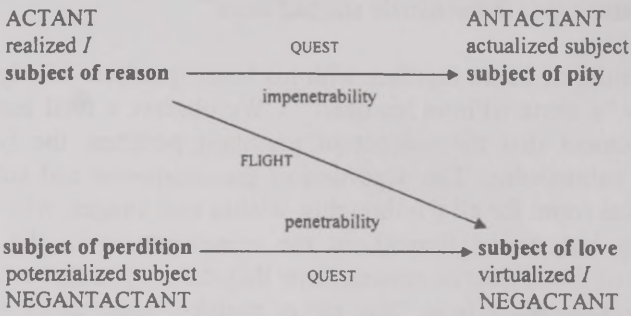

Figure 4

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[36] "Ormai, post mortem, tutto è chiaro, *si rivela*: il poeta-Io non ama, non ha amato, un corpo o un corpo(-scrittura), /.../ ma lo *spirito* del corpo, la *memoria* del corpo(-scrittura), il *nome* di /laura/, la Parola" (Antonelli 2003: 60).

[37] As Sapegno observes, Petrarca uses the name "Laura" only in the second part of the *Canzoniere*, while in the first part we only find her symbolical equivalents in *lauro* or *l'aura*. Only after her death, can Laura be addressed with her proper name. (Sapegno 2003: 101–102).

As shown in Figure 4, the virtual *I* of the first part of the *Canzoniere*, the subject of reason, takes the place of the realized *I* in the second part, while Laura as a potentialized subject of pity becomes actualized. Their complementary parts, that is, the subjects of love and perdition, shift to the background but remain part of the picture. Another important change concerns the role of the Sender: while in the first part the lyrical *I* almost always adressed Amor as "my Lord" ("mio signore"), in the second part he uses the same words to address almost always God. The new form of the passional dialectic is already fully represented in the following passage of song CCLXIV, which opens the second part of the *Canzoniere*:

> I know my fault: not truth misunderstood
> deceives my intellect: Love forces me;
> Love never has allowed
> those who believe to walk on honour's way.
> I sense from time to time, inside my heart,
> a sort of noble harsh severe disdain
> which draws each hidden thought
> onto my brow where it is clearly seen.
> To love a mortal being with such faith
> as should belong to the Lord God alone
> is not allowed to those who live for honour.
> And this disdain calls out with a loud voice
> to reason which is tangled in the senses;
> but, though my reason hears,
> its customary bad habits drive it on;
> they place before its eyes
> she who was only born to make me die,
> pleasing herself too much, and pelasing me.[38]

[38] "Quel ch'i fo veggio, et non m'inganna il vero/ mal conosciuto, anzi mi sforza Amore,/ che la strada d'onore/ mai nol lassa seguir, chi troppo il crede;/ et sento ad ora ad ora venirmi al core/ un leggiadro disdegno aspro et severo/ ch'ogni occulto pensero/ tira in mezzo la fronte, ov'altri 'l vede:/ ché mortal cosa amar con tanta fede/ quanta a Dio sol per debito convensi,/ più si disdice a chi più pregio brama./ Et questo ad alta voce ancho richiama/ la ragione sviata dietro ai sensi;/ ma perch'ell'oda, et pensi tornare,/ il mal costume oltre la spinge, et agli occhi depinge/ quella che sol per farmi morir nacque,/ perch'a me troppo ed a se stessa, piacque." (CCLXIV, 91–108)

Conclusion

Laura's death is the conceptual turning-point, which allows Petrarca to present his work in the form of a book with diegetical development and gives us the possibility to interpret it as a journey with a point of departure and a point of destination. But the borderline between the two parts of the *Canzoniere* is rather insecure: desire penetrates constantly into the word and the word penetrates constantly into desire. The poetical tension of Petrarca's text is built on two contrasting forces: entirety and fragmentarity.[39] While the whole is used to give a teleological meaning to the fragments, on the other hand, fragments are used to keep things constantly open. It is no accident that in the first part of the *Canzoniere* we can find fragments used as anticipations, forward movements, which take us beyond the dominating tone of that part. A recurring image in this sense is that of the sailing boat and the port:

> A long time, in this blindly wandering ship,
> I did not lift my eyes up to the sail
> bearing me prematurely to my end;
> it pleased Him then Who brought me into life
> to summon me so far back from the rocks
> that, some way off, at least I saw the port
> /.../
> O Lord Who rule my end and rule my life,
> before I smash my ship upon the rocks
> guide safely into port my troubled sail[40]

In the second part, on the other hand, there are fragments which describe a return, a movement back, contrasting with the attempts to get rid of past experience and totally adhere to the new guidelines for the subject:

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[39] As Mercuri explains: "The dialectic work-fragment is the fundamental property of the *Rvf* [*Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* — DM] which combines unity and fragment" (Mercuri 2003: 83).

[40] "Chiuso gran tempo in questo cieco legno/ errai, senza levar occhio a la vela/ ch'anzi al mio dí mi trasportava al fine;/ poi piacque a lui che mi produsse in vita/ chiamarme tanto indietro da li scogli/ ch'almen da lunge m'apparisse il porto./.../ Signor de la mia fine et de la vita,/ prima ch'i fiacchi il legno tra li scogli/ drizza a buon porto l'affannata vela." (LXXX, 13–18; 37–39)

I see her, mistress of the house, appear
and drive my dark and heavy thoughts away
with proud serenity in her clear brows.

My soul, which finds such light too much to bear,
sighs as it says, 'Oh, blessed the day
you opened up this pathway with your eyes'[41]

I fully agree with Roberto Mercuri who, while commenting the last song of the *Canzoniere*, affirms that "the references to the proemial sonnet have the function of expressing the substantial identity between the beginning and the end of the experience, wholly characterized by doubt and inner suffering"[42] and opposes the circularity of Petrarca's journey to the verticality of Dante's *Divina Commedia*. What marks Petrarca and the *Canzoniere* as the starting point of a new literary era in western culture is also their way to represent an essentially unresolved passional dilemma. "Le question' mie nove" (the new questions) posed at the end of sestina CCXIV would be the starting-point for intellectuals of the following centuries through Europe:

What is in me to prize? Am I off course?
Is my soul free? Or prisoned in the wood?

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[41] "Come donna in suo albergo altera vène,/ scacciando de l'oscuro et grave core/ co la fronte serena i pensier tristi./ L'alma, che tanta luce non sostene,/ sospira et dice: — O benedetto l'ore/ del dí che questa via con li occhi apristi! —" (CCLXXXIV, 9–14)

[42] "i richiami al sonetto proemiale hanno la funzione di esprimere la sostanziale identità fra l'inizio e la fine dell'esperienza, totalmente iscritta nel dubbio e nella sofferenza interiore." (Mercuri 2003: 68).

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Shakespeare's Construction of the Jew

MOHIT K. RAY

In *The Merchant of Venice* Shakespeare draws heavily on historical imagination rather than on historical reality in creating the character of Shylock and constructs the image in which the mythical Jew assumes the semblance of reality, an image that becomes the stereotype and historical image of a Jew. A close look however reveals that, unlike Marlowe, Shakespeare does not present a simplistic, monomaniac character like Barabas in *The Jew of Malta* but a character who is highly complex. While Shylock is a very powerful appropriation of the traditional image of the Jew that gets a local habitation and a name in Shylock, he is also a man of dignity, an astute man of business and pleads on behalf of his race and humanity. It would then appear that he is more sinned against than sinning, and that he is really as much "honest in his vices" as the Venetians and Christians are "hypocrites in their virtues" (Hazlett 1821: 226–227). In other words, Shakespeare seems to reveal through his treatment of Shylock the hypocrisy of the Venetians and the Christians. It would also appear that, though Shakespeare apparently played to the gallery exploiting the audience's instinctive love of Jew-baiting, his sympathy lies with Shylock. It is a matter of strange historical blindness that Shakespeare's sympathy with Shylock did not come to light till Edmund Kean in his famous presentation of Shylock on his first appearance in London on 26 January 1814 revealed his terrible energy, untold misery and sufferings and the undeserved punishment that is inflicted on him.

In order to properly understand the various complex issues involved in the construction of Shylock, it is necessary to understand first the traditional attitude to Jews and the reason thereof. The Christian tradition looks upon Jewishness as a moral depravity because it chose

Barabas and rejected Christ, chose the robber and rejected the Saviour, chose the flesh and rejected the spirit, chose the earthly pleasures and rejected the treasure of heaven. As the chooser of this world and the betrayer of Christ, the Saviour, the Jew is a type of Satan himself. Another reason for the hatred against the Jews was the practice of usury by the Jews. Christianity prohibits usury as an offence against the notion of charity. A man in distress must be helped, but not out of selfish interest, and money should not beget money, as it is also against nature. Incidentally, in Latin, usury, usurers and the law concerning the loans are called "fenebris", from the word "fetus", since money or loan can give birth to money. But as far as Shylock or any Jew for that matter is concerned, he is well within his rights in practicing usury because the Levitical law sanctions it. Secondly, and more importantly, as the Jews were uprooted from other trades by the flood of religious prejudice, they were forced to become moneylenders to make a living. In other words, this was the only opportunity open to them where they were not obliged to enter into an unhealthy and unfair competition with the Christians. Wronged and outlawed, the Jews pounced upon this only opportunity left open to them. The power of money derived from usury became thus an instrument of defence against restriction and persecution.

Now let us briefly look at some historical instances of persecution. Warner Martin and Muir tell us how after Jerusalem was captured from the Turks in 1099, and Godfrey de Bouillon having been chosen as its ruler, "the mere love of fighting mastered the Crusaders' heart. Even a good and virtuous knight like Godfrey, too pious to wear a crown of gold where Christ had worn a crown of thorns, had no spirit of mercy. He like the rest regarded himself as an avenger. Without shrinking, he took his share in the hideous massacres, even of women and children, that followed the storming of Jerusalem. And this pitiless fury turned too against the Jews. Not merely in Palestine but in distant parts of Europe, they were plundered and ill-treated by kings and barons." (Warner, Martin, Muir 1943: 123)

Raphael Holinshed, chronicling the coronation of Richard I in 1189, describes how "King Richard, of a zealous mind of Christ's religion", abhorring the Jews commanded that no Jew should come within the church when he would receive the crown, nor within the palace when he was at dinner. (Holinshed 1577: 477) In 1290 Edward I expelled the Jews from his kingdom. James Shapiro (1988: 269–279) points out that the historical record is obscure as to the number of

Jews actually expelled, and notes that the English wanted to regard their country as free of Jews rather than that Jews were truly absent. There must have been a significant number of Jews living in London before the 1654 Whitehall Conference when the ban was lifted and the Jews were allowed to return to England. Even after expulsion there were some persons living in England descended from Jews who had converted to Christianity. They were called "New Christians" and they lived as Roman Catholics. But there were many among the converts who avowed Christianity but covertly continued to live as Jews, practicing various rabbinical rites and rituals at home. They were called *Marranos.* When the Jews were expelled from England most of them went to Spain and Portugal where there was a substantial Jewish population. But there also their lot followed them. In 1492 Ferdinand V and Isabella I expelled all the Jews from Spain and in 1497 all the Portuguese Jews were forcibly converted to Christianity.

Now let us look at Shakespeare's presentation of the Jew in his plays other than *The Merchant of Venice.* In *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (1591) Launce says that everybody was sad on his parting, "my mother weeping, my father wailing, my sister crying, our maid howling, our cat wringing her hands; yet did not this cruel-hearted ever shed one tear. He is a stone, a very pebble stone, and has no more pity in him than a dog. A Jew would have wept to see our parting" (Act I Scene III). Launce compares a Jew with animals and draws on the traditional image of a Jew as a ruthless person. The idea of "even a Jew" simply implies that. In another scene when Launce asks Speed to go with him to the alehouse he remarks, "If not thou art an Hebrew, a Jew, and not worth the name of a Christian". As Speed asks "Why?" Launce replies, "Because thou hast not so much charity in thee as to go to the ale with a Christian" (Act II Scene V). This short dialogue brings under sharp focus the bitter relationship and age-old enmity between a Jew and a Christian where a Jew is seen contemptuously as something like an anti-Christ. In *The Merchant of Venice* Shylock's refusal to dine with Bassanio, ("I will buy with you, sell with you and so following but I will not eat with you, drink with you, nor pray with you") makes it very clear that he will not have any association other than the commercial with a Christian, because he is fully conscious of the deep-seated hatred that Bassanio bears towards him. In *Much Ado About Nothing* (1598) when Benedick says to himself about Beatrice, "...if I do not love her, I am a Jew" (Act III Scene II), he actually

draws on the traditional image of the Jew as a person devoid of tender emotions and thus a stranger to the feelings of love. In Henry IV Part I (1597) in contradicting Peto's remarks, "No, no, they were bound, every one of them, or I am a Jew else, an Ebrew Jew (Act II Scene IV), Falstaff's utterance only reinforces the traditional image of the Jew as an accomplice, if not an incarnation of Devil. The mythical transformation of the Jew through the medieval centuries and then three centuries following the expulsion of the Jews by Edward I gave the Elizabethans, not excluding Shakespeare, their picture of Jewishness. They saw a Jew as an outsider, a strange creature, a walking, talking and acting phantom, a legendary creature thinly existent or even devoid of reality. Paradoxically, the Jews belonged to all states or no state. Even in countries like Spain or Italy they did not belong to those with whom or under whom they lived. A Jew was an outsider. He was compelled to live in a special part, the Jewish quarter or "Ghetto"(which literally means 'cut off') generally surrounded by a wall. In *The Merchant of Venice* Shylock is an outsider par excellence, enveloped in all the mysteries of the creature that comes from outside and abroad. He is also an outsider in the romantic world of the play and is completely impervious to the romanticism of love, glory of Venice or even the joy of life. In the sixteenth century when increasing commerce and navigation brought England and the Mediterranean closer, England was full of rumors and reports about Jews. But Shakespeare, it seems, was not so much interested in the dynamic role played by the Jews in controlling and wielding the social energy, as in the traditional image of the Jew. In other words, he dramatized what already existed in a nebulous form in the consciousness of the audiences, shaped Shylock out of the memories and conceptions of the past and presented him as a starkly realistic character, giving us a glimpse of the character who, howsoever maltreated, never loses his dignity. Shylock knows where he stands in the Christian society and therefore strictly adheres to his role as a moneylender. His very first speech in the play gives us an impression of an astute man of business. He repeats the amount he has to lend ("Three thousand ducats, well"), considers the time given ("For three months and Antonio bound"). He then examines the solvency of the granter and the risks involved in maritime commerce ("Ships are but boards, sailors but men, there be land rats and water rats, water thieves, and land thieves, I mean pirates..."Act I Scene III). In the same scene when Antonio enters we

hear Shylock saying "aside": "I hate him for he is a Christian". But what he says immediately afterwards is more significant, as it underscores the commercial aspect of his character: "But more, for that in low simplicity/ He lends money gratis and brings down/ The rate of usance here with us in Venice". The speech spoken aside, and therefore frank and uninhibited, makes two things clear. First, Shylock hates Antonio because he is a Christian and Shylock has suffered at the hands of the Christians, as all the Jews have suffered, and also because — as it will be presently clear from the conversation between Antonio and Shylock — he has personally been insulted and humiliated by Antonio on several occasions. Secondly, the Christian charity of lending money without interest affects him adversely, as it cuts into his only means of living. Yet, in the course of his conversation he politely but very strongly defends usury ("thrift is blessing if men steal not"). Antonio calls him a villain, "an evil soul producing holy witness", but in spite of sufficient cause of provocation Shylock keeps his cool, comes back to the business at hand and then as Antonio asks, "Well, Shylock, shall we be beholding you?" he gives vent to his feelings. At last he has got a chance to address the Venetians and state his case and express his genuine grievance. As a Jew he has to put up with wrongs, "For sufferance is the badge of all our tribe". The badge is not only metaphorical but also literal as well since the Jews had to wear a yellow cap in sign of their nationality. The wrongs that he enumerates presents the Christians in general and Antonio in particular in a negative light: "You call me misbeliever, cut-throat dog,/ And spit upon my Jewish gaberdine,/... You that did void rheum upon my beard,/ And foot me as you spurn a stranger cur/ Over your threshold..." (96–105). Shylock has been treated like a street dog for no other fault than that he is a Jew, and so when he speaks he speaks not only on his own behalf but on behalf of his people. His arguments are based on human rights that need no bond to support them. By the end of his sarcastic speech, "Fair sir you spit on me on Wednesday last; / You spurn'd me such a day; another time/ You call'd me dog; and for those courtesies/ I'll lend you thus much moneys?" The prevailing mood is no longer one of pathos but of a rebellious rebuff. It is the voice of a proud creature that triumphs over his adversary, lays bare the inhuman behavior of the Christians and tilts the scale of audience response in his own favor. The next full opportunity for Shylock to state his case comes in the famous speech

of Act III Scene I: "I am a Jew. Hath not a Jew eyes? Hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? Fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is? If you prick us, do we not bleed? If you tickle us, do we not laugh? If you poison us, do we not die?" Here Shylock claims a hearing on the grounds that a Jew as a man is like any other man, like any Christian for that matter. It logically follows, therefore, "If you wrong us, shall we not revenge? If we are like you in the rest, we will resemble you in that" (ll 57–58). Repetition of the word "Christian" thrice with increasingly sneering emphasis on the word reinforces the idea of equality: hatred for hatred, revenge for revenge. In the inspired yet reasoned speech Shylock pleads for his nation. He pleads for the abolition of that injustice and oppression down the centuries that went into the making of Shylock. Here Shylock is no longer just a usurer or an individual Jew but a pure patriot aflame with the white heat of revolt against the wrongs mercilessly inflicted on his nation. Behind Shylock's fury lies a deep hate which is a curious complex of multiple motives: the hate of a Jew for the Christian, of the despised alien for the proud Venetians, and of the usurer for the generous man who brings down the rate of interest by lending money gratis. What fuels his fury is his impassioned diatribe against cruelty and injustice. In Act IV Scene I Shylock will again cite another glaring and shameful instance of cruelty and abrogation of human rights evident in the Christians' treatment of the slaves like animals: "You have among you many a purchased slave /Which, like your asses and your dogs and mules,/ You use in abject and in slavish parts,/ Because you bought them" (ll 90–92). Shylock rebels against the inhuman handling of the slaves like animals and thus challenges one of the most important economic institutions of the medieval Christian world still persisting in the sixteenth century. In his bid to defend the legality of the bond, he calls attention to the greater and more widespread injustice and mercilessness of the Christian world. Moreover, it is a cogent argument for Shylock to use, since a slave-trader may be said to be dealing in human flesh. Thus we can discern that there are three distinct stages of Shylock's rebellion against injustice. In Act I Scene III he refers to the ignominious and public insults he has suffered at the hands of Antonio as a Jew. In Act

III Scene I he speaks on behalf of all the Jews and in Act IV Scene I he speaks on behalf of humanity.

Shylock is a much-suffered man. He is an old man with a young daughter who elopes with a Christian. Not only that. She steals his money and the ring given to him by his beloved wife, and brazen-facedly joins his adversaries, and promises to become a Christian. Shylock is a fair game for the young lovers. Not only his daughter, but even his servant leaves him and his friend Tubal plays with him in his misery. After the fiasco of the trial he is robbed of his fortune and the most cruel condition is given for his survival: he must become a Christian to avoid capital punishment. After the filial ingratitude, and the loss of his daughter, his fortune and his faith he is virtually annihilated. To become a Christian is a strange punishment for a Jew and certainly very hard for a man who has been so thoroughly a Jew. Still Shylock does not lose his dignity. Even after his daughter has run away with a Christian, taking the valuables with her, he does not parade his pain in public. He complains of the loss and expresses his shock only to his friend Tubal. That Shakespeare wanted him to maintain his dignity is evident from the fact that his lamentations are not presented on the stage but are reported by Solanio, and since Solanio's contempt for Shylock is manifest in his references to Shylock as "the villain Jew" (II, viii), "the dog Jew" (II, viii) etc., his report cannot be taken as a dispassionate, faithful one. As he chuckles at the discomfiture of Shylock, his report is likely to be a biased, edited and exaggerated version of the actual situation.

A close reading of the play also reveals the moral decrepitude of the Venetians and the Christian characters. If Antonio rejects interest with moral scorn, his Christian friends in Venice have no hesitation in living upon "excesses". Venice in the sixteenth century was notable for its corruption through covetous pursuit of trade and venture. If Shylock's offence is greed and he is treated contemptuously for that Bassanio's first reference to Portia is: "In Belmont is a lady richly left" (I, I, 161). The first consideration that wells up spontaneously from the unconscious is the prospect of getting wealthy through marriage. Basanio is a prodigal gambler whose vast expenditure in wooing is laid out as a venture to win "a golden fleece", Portia's fair person and wealth. If the Christians find Shylock intolerable and detestable for his cruelty and mercilessness, the inhumanity and injustice of the Christians is writ large in the maltreatment of Shylock,

their wild glee at the destruction of Shylock and their practice of slave trade.

It may be worthwhile to look briefly at this point at the situation prevailing in England in the late sixteenth century. In Elizabethan England a culture that officially condemned money-lending saw people growing rich in practicing it, making what George Herbert described as "a Jewish choice", because it cherished the mundane. A culture that officially valued inheritance and continuity saw the lowborn rise to power and prominence. The identity of such people was self-created and was associated with the continental enterprise like foreign trade or money-lending and thus anxiety producing. Bacon admits in "Usury" that making a profit is a goal that all men seem to desire even though the desire could appear a "Jewish choice". In an age of expansion and commercial prosperity one who controlled money also controlled the social energy. Deep down, therefore, lay the complex feeling of jealousy and allurement and fear of the self-fashioned Jews or the moneylenders who posed a threat to the social order determined by birth and continuity. The Christians saw how these people contained, controlled and wielded the social energy during the period of transition when the old feudal aristocracy was disintegrating and grudgingly yielding place to the new rich mercantile class.

Shakespeare, with his keen psychological insight and almost uncanny perception of the contemporary historical forces, could clearly see the psychology of Jew-baiting. Through Shylock's speeches he lays bare not only the hypocrisy of the Christians but also the meanness, the inhumanity and the injustice perpetrated by the Christians to the Jews. He, therefore, takes sides. He is with Shylock and the Jews, the oppressed and the injured. But at the same time, howsoever sympathetic he might be towards the Jews, it was not possible for him to come out in the open and give the moral support to Shylock, because the audience in that case would reject the play. So the strategy that he adopts is to raise questions but leave them unanswered and thus create an awareness among the auditors about the injustice done to the Jews. Thus when in Act I Scene I Shylock appeals on his own behalf and on behalf of the race, and reminds Antonio how Antonio treated him like a despised animal, the words have no effect on Antonio who insolently threatens "to spit on thee again, to spurn thee too" (I, iii 126). The reaction of Antonio, his blatantly uncivilized

behavior, shows how impervious he is to the appeals of Shylock. Again, in Act III Scene1 when Shylock, in a spirited defence of his stand ("Hath not a Jew eyes...") addresses Solanio and Salarino they do not reply to the Jew although they are otherwise quite vociferous. Shakespeare makes them leave the stage shortly afterwards, and Shylock's address remains unanswered. In fact, the parting remark of Solanio, on seeing Tubal entering ("Here comes another of the tribe: a third cannot be matched, unless the devil himself turn Jew") clearly indicates that Shylock's words have fallen on deaf ears. Even in the Court, in Act IV Scene 1, when Shylock sharply points out the inhumanity of the slave trade, his attack on slavery remains unanswered. As the speech ends the Duke passes on to another subject: "Upon my power I may dismiss this Court,/ Unless Bellario, a learned doctor,/ Whom I have sent for to determine this,/ Come here today" (IV, I 104–107). The only possible explanation for all these silences may be that while Shakespeare the humanist realized that something was seriously wrong with the Christian treatment of the Jews and took sides with the oppressed and the injured and upheld their cause, Shakespeare the dramatist, much too conscious of the contemporary audiences' prejudices against the Jew, did not press the point too much lest the play be rejected by the audience. It is this very ambiguity and Shakespeare's ambivalent attitude to the Jewish question that makes Shylock a most complex character: a man of medieval origin putting forward arguments of a more progressive time.

In this connection it is necessary to remember the contribution of Edmund Kean in bringing out the terrible energy of Shylock whom he presented as a man stung to rage and who with sardonic, contemptuous scorn fought to the very last. Even Hazlitt who was in the audience on the first night (26 January 1814) conceded: "Certainly our sympathies are much oftener with him than with his enemies. He is honest in his vices; they are hypocrites in their virtues." (Ib.) Cowden-Clarke describes how Kean, who took the stage by storm on his first appearance, delivered the famous speech of Act III Scene 1 ("Hath not a Jew eyes..."):

> To those who... can remember Edmund Kean's delivery of this superb speech of wild wrath, pleading its claim to some show of justice, there is excitement in recalling the wonderful eyes flashing out their red sparkles, the

> body wreathing from head to foot, the arm thrown upward as witness to the recorded oath of vengeance. The attitude, as the voice, rose to a sublime climax when these words ("The villainy you teach me as I will execute, and I shall go hard but I will better the instruction" III, I 64–65) were uttered; then there was a drop, both of person and tone, as he hissed out the closing sentence by deep concentrated malignity". (Furness 1964: 129)

Shylock's sublime imprecation becomes the most eloquent plea that the human voice has dared to utter for a despised race. Through Kean's powerful acting one could see Shylock as the champion and avenger of his whole shamefully maltreated race. In his tones one could hear the protest crying to heaven, of human rights trodden underfoot. It is a protest against the hypocrisy of his oppressors, and as Francois Victor Hugo observed: "A pound of Antonio's flesh even if obtained could never outweigh, in the scales of reprisal, the millions of corpses heaped in the Christian shambles by a butchery of thirteen centuries". (Ib. 128) The trial in Act IV Scene1 is a mockery of justice. The judge who admitted Shylock's right to cut a pound of flesh from the body of Antonio, by that very admission recognized Shylock's right to the blood inseparable from flesh. Furthermore, since he is entitled to one pound he can, if he likes, take less. But both the rights are denied to Shylock. In this connection Ihering's comments are worth quoting:

> And when under the weight of the decision of a judge who nullifies law by a miserable quibble, Shylock succumbs, and the butt of bitter scorn and jeers, totters away with trembling knees, who can help feeling that in his person the law of Venice is broken down, that it is not Shylock the Jew who staggers off but the typical figure of the Jew of the Middle Ages, that pariah of society who cried for law in vain. (Ib. 410)

Shylock had a firm faith in law, a faith sustained by the judge himself until "the catastrophe strikes him like a thunderbolt, shivering his delusion to atoms, and teaching him that he is nothing but the despised medieval Jew, whose rights are in the same breath acknowledged, and by fraud, denied". (Ib.)

Shylock had such a firm faith in law that he can hardly believe that he is receiving fair treatment. When Portia warns, — "if thou dost

shed/ One drop of Christian blood, thy lands and goods are by *the laws of Venice* confiscate/ Unto the State of Venice" (IV, I 304–307 emphasis added), a nonplussed and bewildered Shylock asks Portia, "Is that the law?". Portia replies: "Thyself shalt see the act" (IV, I 310) but she never shows it to him. Shylock realizes the elaborate deceit so cunningly played on him, but he is helpless in an alien land and here is Hawkins's account of Kean's rendering of Shylock at the moment of his terrible abasement when the verdict has been passed on him:

> The sudden change of Shylock's whole appearance when the cause turned against him; the happy pause in 'I am — content' as if it almost choked him to bring out the word; the partial bowing down of his inflexible will when he said, 'I pray you give me leave to go from hence, *I am not well*' ; the horror of his countenance when told of his enforced conversion to Christianity, and, to crown all, the fine mixture of scorn and pity with which he turned and surveyed the ribald Gratiano, — all exhibited a succession of studies to which words fail to do justice. He retired, as Shakespeare intended he should retire, with the audience possessed in his favour. (Ib. 229)

After Kean Shylock has been played with special success by Macready, Charles Kean and Edwin Booth. It must, however, be noted that since the performance of Kean *The Merchant of Venice* has been Shylock's play, and although he appears only in five scenes it is he for whom people remember the play.

It is, however, a profound irony of literary history that in spite of Shakespeare's perceptive criticism of the maltreatment of the Jews by the Christians for centuries, and his presentation of Shylock not as evil by nature but made evil by the treatment to which he and his race have been subjected, Shylock has become a stereotype of a Jew, an embodiment of malignity, avarice, cruelty and inhumanity. To think of a Jew is to think of Shylock whetting his knife for a pound of Christian flesh. It is a strange case where the character does not mirror history but shapes it, and wrongly.

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Rooma päevik as a Synthesis of Karl Ristikivi's European Novels

RUTT HINRIKUS

Rooma päevik (*A Roman Diary*) is the last novel of Karl Ristikvi, published in 1976. Written in the form of a diary, it breaks off mid-sentence. Since the author died shortly after the publication of the novel, critics have sought in this cryptic work moods of impending departure. The putative author of *Rooma päevik* is Kaspar von Schmerzburg, a German from the Baltic region, who goes to Rome in 1765. In the novel's afterword, Ristikivi designates himself as the publisher of the diary. Thus the text before us is a fictional travel diary from the 18th century, and the afterword informs us that *Rooma päevik* is the last part of Kaspar von Schmerzburg's "Diary of Longings." The diary of longings only partly corresponds to diary form; it is a mixture of truth and imagination; some sections resemble a novel, others are written in verse. The author of the diary is a solitary like Ristikivi himself, who claims that a diary enables one to gain a sense of the author's personality, beliefs and world view. The writer adds: "Although he regarded himself as a Swedish subject, Kaspar von Schmerzburg could write his nationality as "European," given his extraordinary destiny" (Ristikivi 1976: 231). This autobiographical cue clearly points to *A Roman Diary* as the record of an allegorical journey. One might add that it is a last work in a lengthy cycle of novels, and for its interpretation it is useful to be familiar with the author's earlier oeuvre.

Karl Ristikivi (1912–1977) has been called one of the most outstanding narrators in the Estonian literature of the 20th century. He is undoubtedly one of the most European-oriented Estonian writers, and maybe one of the most cosmopolitan.

Karl Ristikivi was born in the backcountry of provincial Läänemaa on October 16 1912. He studied geography at the University of Tartu, and became an acknowledged writer, publishing his first novel *Fire and Iron* (*Tuli ja raud*) in 1938, and winning for it a significant reward. He managed to publish two more novels in Estonia before the end of the Estonian republic. Ristikivi's own life took him across the Baltic Sea as a refugee — to Finland in 1943, and a year later to Sweden. He, like very many of his compatriots, preferred life-long political exile to living under the totalitarian Soviet regime. He died in exile in 1977.

Ristikivi's earlier works had discussed Estonian history and society — urbanisation processes seen through the eyes of an individual and the events of the years 1939–1941, which saw the collapse of a society and a way of life. The protagonists of the three first novels — a worker, a bourgeois, and an intellectual, begin their struggle for happiness in boyhood. After much effort they approach their goal, but happiness eludes them. Indeed, one of the central motifs of Ristikivi's oeuvre is the human journey (*Inimese teekond*), the title he chose for his only collection of poetry, published in 1972. The journey as a figure for human existence had declared its importance for Ristikivi at an early age. The literary works he sees as influential in his youth were John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, alongside Hesse's *Steppenwolf* and Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland* (Ristikivi 2002: 292). All three of these indeed render the magical experience of a journey. Thus all of Ristikivi's novels might be considered travel letters from a dangerous journey, of an unfulfilled dream of safe arrival at the desired country.

After the family novels (Bildungsromane) of his first period, and two "collective novels" of the second period where he perhaps took some cues from the example of Jules Romains, Ristikivi published the representative novel of Estonian modernism, *Hingede öö* (*All Souls' Night*) in 1953. After a creative crisis that amounted to a dark night of the soul, he began to the great surprise to all his contemporaries to write historical novels set in Europe of the late Mediaeval and early modern times. Sometimes, Ristikivi has been mentioned together with the *grand old man* of Estonian historical novel Jaan Kross. When Ristikivi published his first historical novel *Põlev lipp* (*The Burning Banner*) in 1961, Jaan Kross (and many others) received it with

certain perplexity and disappointment that the work of a highly appreciated writer had taken such an unexpected turn.

According to Kross, historical novels are reconstructive, illustrative, analogising or philosophical (Kross 1986: 138). In 1974 in Toronto, he talked about a new level of the treatment of historical material in works of fiction and claimed that "national historical literature has not fulfilled its task well until it has not created a sufficiently serious and believable cultural vision of the past on its own literary level. Such result can mainly be achieved via historical novels depicting different personalities." (Kross 1982: 112) The latter option has found excellent representation in Kross' own historical novels. For Ristikivi, history forms only occasional, although very picturesque, backgrounds. Time is indivisible; the past and the present are inseparable: "Instead of my own life story, which has flowed in the shadows, I borrowed from the biography of Europe," Ristikivi has explained in a letter to Bernard Kangro (Kangro/Ristikivi 1985: 10). Like many other writers, Ristikivi accepts that all that he writes comes out of himself. In this sense it is all the more meaningful that the writer is a political refugee.

For writers who have chosen exile, the struggle for the past of one's people becomes a weapon in their fight for their people's future. Such a struggle specifically characterizes nations who have experienced loss or defeat, as distinguished with young, rising nations. For Estonian literature, the interpretation of the past began with the national awakening, at the beginning of the last third of the 19th century, and became relevant once again in the 1930s. After the annexation of Estonia by the Soviet Union, the numerous group of exiled writers continued the interrupted literary traditions of the 1930s, with its predilection for realist prose. The thematic of Estonian diaspora literature is dominated by depiction of rural life of the 1930s, while the historical novel is an infrequent guest. When Ristikivi began writing on historical subjects, such themes were still exceptions.

Though some other exile writers wrote historical novels, Ristikivi's did not meet the diaspora reader's expectations: he opts for an European past over against the specifically Estonian, preferring existentialist scepticism with regard to the human condition to allegories of the nation. Such is the historical vision Ristikivi disseminates among his several historical novels. Explaining his creative method in a letter to Uku Masing, Ristikivi writes, "For once

I arrived at the realization that I lacked the strength and skill to build a Gothic cathedral, I took my example from the Oriental building master and began to build one pavilion next to the other, until in the end they would attain to an orderly complex." (Ristikivi 1996: 72). In another letter to exiled writer Bernard Kangro, he addes, "You keep searching for the master plan for my historical cycle. Should I declare openly that it was Bach's *Die Kunst der Fuge*?" (Kangro/Ristikivi 1985: 23).

The historical cycle of novels does take the pattern of J. S. Bach's *The Art of Fugue*. The first novel introduced the theme, while all the subsequent works represent variations. At first, the author planned to write 24 novels, but later he reduced the number to 16, starting from the 13th century and with each of the following novels moving nearer to modern times.

Having exchanged Estonian history for European history, and tirelessly declaring that Estonia had always been a part of Europe, Ristikivi's subjects from European history allow him to follow the development, persistence, and disappearance of great ideas.. His scepticism was not aimed at the old Europe, which he loved, but articulated his fear of "the end of history", which he saw looming in the crisis of humanism and in the dangers an individual had to face.

In Ristikivi's vision, man has been thrown into the waves of history and his ultimate task was to remain true to his mission. This theme, and its opposite, treason or forgetting one's mission, was introduced in the opening novel of the historical cycle, *Põlev lipp*. This thematic opposition explains why the anticipation of a great moment undergirds several of his historical novels, just as restless anticipation of something new and extraordinary, breaking the routine of ordinary everyday life had already been a central motif already in his earlier novel *Rohtaed* (*Herbarium*) In *Rooma päevik* this theme acquires a particular suggestiveness.

Published in 1976 as the closing novel of a series of eleven works, *Rooma päevik* has the double valence of a testament-like summa and a prophecy. Ristikivi had by then already completed three trilogies, intercepted by two "interludes". We have reason to believe that *A Roman Diary* was intended to be the third interlude between the third trilogy and the fourth, which remained unwritten. At the same time, it forms a kind of a coda to resonate with the overture, which I take to be the earlier modernist *Hingede öö*.

Anticipation as a process which lends meaning to everyday existence and the subject of the human dignity of doing one's duty bring Ristikivi nearer to a book that was important to him, Dino Buzzati's *Desert of the Tartars*: both works tell of human loneliness; both works are charged with a particular kind of surreal tension. Upon beginning to write the novel *Viimane linn* (*The Last City*, 1962), Ristikivi expressed in his diary a fear that he would exploit the theme already used by Buzzati. Though they avoid surface similarities of plot, Ristikivi's novels, including *A Roman Diary*, share Buzzati's tense anticipation of fulfilment, a particular kind of aesthetic of "eventless events," or the absence of a decisive event. Though the diary-novel is set in the 18th century, its time is also tomorrow, next year, never, and always, wherever paradise and hell meet.

One other, seemingly coincidental feature, links *Rooma päevik* with *Hingede öö*. Ristikivi's novels, even those such as *Imede saar* (*Island of Miracles*) that formally have first-person narrators, are likelier to use the point of view of the observer than that of the subject. Interior monologue, which is missing from Ristikivi's earlier novels, appears in isolated cases, most often as the device of "work within a work." The only two exceptions are *Hingede öö* and *Rooma päevik*, which employ first-person narration. Ristikivi poses as the person who sees to publication the fictional diary of the fictional Kaspar von Schmerzburg; thus this also is a "novel within a novel." Kaspar's diary has been written in the span of one month. Since the summer of 1957, Ristikivi himself kept a diary for 10 years, making entries mostly about his creative process. There are many indications that this private text was written with a view to publication at some future point, at least with an eye to not excluding such a possibility. It is a confession, many of the codes of which remain concealed. "A Roman Diary" resembles such an encoded message. Endel Nirk, author of a monograph on Ristikivi has pointed to the complicated structure of *Rooma päevik*, somewhat at odds with an intentional aim at simplicity; he also sees the end of the work merging into the visions of someone afflicted with illness. (Nirk 1989:..). Jaan Undusk has analyzed the *Rooma päevik* in the context of his article on *Hingede öö,* and pointed to the special importance of visions in the structure of the novel. Ristikivi himself indicates that the novel's open ending poses plural interpretive possibilities.

The novels's protagonist, Kaspar von Schmerzburg goes to Rome to relive and re-experience in an even more perfect way everything he can recall of his first visit to Rome twenty years earlier. Though he fears that he will never arrive, he is in Rome already the next day. Such contradictions are highly charged with meaning in *Rooma päevik*, just as it is significant that Rome is not what it used to be. Or has Kaspar himself changed that much? To stay with Ristikivi's topos of the journey, the central theme of the work of literature as travel letter could be deemed the solving of a riddle, and at the same time, the search for the end of the journey. Kaspar has set out in search of Rome and of that Kaspar whom he had been in Rome. Instead of the carefree quality of former times, he recognizes the signs of journey's end; he is always sensing some danger and feeling anxiety. Along the way he seems to be sent different messages, but he is unable to decipher them. Unexpectedly he finds himself in a role of an apprentice; he wants to study the world to better grasp its meaning. The name of the main character — Kaspar von Schmerzburg — carries a meaning of its own. But is not his real name. What name he does have? A faithful vassal bearing this name can be found already in the first novel of the historical series, where young King Konradin throws him a ring. Since the Schmerzburg of those far-away times was a wandering knight, Kaspar is also fascinated by wandering knights. Thinking about wandering knights, he says: your road did not take you to Rome, Rome was not your country.

Unlike Konradin in Ristikivi's first historical novel, Kaspar does not ask "How can I, young, poor, and alone, win back the faraway land in the thrall of a mighty enemy?" This autobiographical question expands instead into an existential one. Twenty years later everything is more complicated: in the meantime the world and Rome have changed; nothing is, as it was in the beginning.

According to Ristikivi's historical vision, wandering knights resembled both Hercules and Ulysses. The majority of Ristikivi's characters are wandering knights in search of their mission. As seen through Kaspar's eyes, the task of a wandering knight is to help women in distress, to help everybody in distress, but he could not recognise a woman in distress. Thus he tries to convince himself: "A pilgrim's robe would suit me better, since I, too, have taken to road primarily to find peace in my heart." On the other hand, the symbols of wandering knights lead us to King Arthur and his Knights of the

Round Table and Parzival: "could you advise me, who he might be. Some of King Arthur's knights, maybe Parzival". The quest of the main character can also be taken as an allegorical quest for the Holy Grail, and the signs he is given should help him to ask the right question.

Peace of heart is unavoidably connected with the recognition of the right question and the understanding of the processes surrounding the person. Kaspar sees different visions. In the first vision or dream he finds himself in a tower or on a cliff edge, from where he cannot escape until a young girl gives him her hand and helps him descend. Then he sees that actually he had been very near to the ground all the time.

In the next vision the main character sees a white image of a woman and this is a message to warn him. He is too much absorbed in what he sees. He cannot distinguish between the wrong and the right woman; he cannot decide which of the women is Mrs. Langstiffel, who is in danger-- the saving of whom should be the task of a knight, and which of them is an impostor. Losing his way near Colosseum, Kaspar chances upon Cecilia Metella's grave and sees his own double there. In such a way, not only what Kaspar sees and experiences, but also the things he has to choose from are questionable.

In *Hingede öö* the protagonist is a man who has lost his way and seeks the way out of a strange house. In *Rooma päevik* the protagonst is a disciple, a wandering knight and a pilgrim who seeks a sure city and meets with many allegorical persons. The distinction between the temporal frame of the novels (the 1950s in *Hingede öö* and the 1760s in *Rooma päevik*) is only superficial: the inner times of both protagonists might be seen as overlapping. The spatial structures of both novels are also similar: in its different rooms and spiritual conditions the house in *Hingede öö* holds universal questions. One of the key symbols of the text is Rome, the eternal city, uniting time and space, boundaries and boundlessness, the moment and eternity. Kaspar's companion states: "We are two nameless persons in a city that is only a name". Bakhtin's concept of the chronotope as "the complex of relations of time and space as instantiated in literature" fits well with Ristikivi's idea of the world. (Bakhtin 1987: 44) Nowhere do time and space meet more than in Ristikivi's Rome. In his poetry Ristikivi expresses the same idea in terms of the relativity of time: "the length of all roads in time is the same", and adds "Our roots are in every

place that we have ever passed through." In Ristikivi's temporal scheme the past, the present, and the future are central concepts that structure the meaning of the fictional text. Everything repeats, because humans do not change and existence is one and the same. In one of his poems he writes, "but when we sit down one evening/ before us, there have been sitting/ ten thousand, who returned from the war/ and three hundred, who never returned." (Ristikivi 1972: 56)

He is a seeker after a lost home, but he searches for it more in an existential than in a temporal or topological sense.

> Olemine — mitteolemine
> üks neist on uni
> ja teine ei ole sedagi.[1]

Lotman has written about the oppositions that organize a spatial structure and their topological markers: the main characteristics of a boundary are its insurmountability and impermeability (Lotman 1990: 103). To follow Lotman, the blurred boundary in Ristikivi's *Rooma päevik* points to a complex example of the partitioning of space, where one and the same world is divided in different ways for different characters (ib. 105).

Wandering about in the Eternal City, Kaspar meets Ottavio — a young boy who promises to show him much, among other things his own palace. In answer to the question how Kaspar could find him, Ottavio says that he will find Kaspar, he will wait for him. At the end of the book Kaspar has another vision that takes him to the deathbed of Emperor Otto, who had lived at the turn of the millennium, and he realises that the young boy Ottavio and Emperor Otto are one and the same person, similarly to the old Empress Adelheid and Comtessa Damasini. Kaspar is haunted by a constant feeling of *deja vu*, leading him to believe that all is one and the same.

Kaspar himself affirms: "Strange locations have always attracted me more than the already familiar paths. Can a Bedouin feel homesickness? Maybe only toward an oasis, shimmering on the horizon, which actually is not there. But still — there is one exception, and this is Rome." The image of Rome first appears as an oasis, but as an oasis that may not be there. This image is reinforced by Kaspar's fear of

[1] Being-nonbeing/one of these is sleep/the other is not even that.

never arriving in Rome. And when he has finally arrived, he feels that he has reached the end of his wanderings. But the end is silence.

When one of the characters of the book claims that Rome is the city of the past, his opponent states that from now on it will be a city of the future — we should only choose what it would be. But in our turn, we are chosen as well.

Thus on the ruins of an antique Colossos, Kaspar discovers the eternal city of Christ and the longing to be a wandering knight. Ristikivi's novel is cosmopolitan and cyclical as an old knight novel as Jaan Undusk has mentioned. (1988: 96)

The decline of medieval time had brought existential solitude into the European soul. Thus the main character is waiting for a solution, and when the solution arrives (the book interrupts in the middle of a word, leaving all possible interpretations open), it is — Death.

Likewise, the character Giovanni Drogo of Dino Buzzati's novel is waiting for his mission, for his last fight and delivery from the endlessly repeating routine. When the hour finally arrives, it is nothing else but an old man's fight with death. Buzzatti's book is, actually, very close to Ristikivi's ideas: loyalty to one's mission, adherence to one's duty and endless existential emptiness. "I pity the passing of each day, because we do not know how many of them we have been allotted. And still, the majority of them have been spent uselessly, either in expectation or in fear."

Ristikivi's visions of man and history are universal (in addition to comparison with Dino Buzzati, we could also talk about the influence of Thomas Mann and parallels with his *The Magic Mountain*, etc.). The fears of Ristikivi as a writer are not in relation with literature, but with the reader. In one of his novels (*Lohehambad — 'Dragon's Teeth'*), a character who is a writer deliberates, whether the readers will not take him as somebody like Sir Walter Scott, who writes historical adventures about things that have long been outdated, about which nobody bothers any more.

The city of Rome with its houses and squares is, undoubtedly, one of the characters of the Ristikivi's novel. More space has been devoted to one certain image — a great marble ear — maybe the God's, but maybe Jupiter's, which had been shown to the main character. Is it not possible that this ear has a double meaning, and that it refers not only to God's all-hearing ear, but also to that of the reader? Gaston Bachelard has said that sometimes it is form that directs and closes our

first visions. Images that are too clear turn into universal ideas (Bachelard 1999: 183).

The forms often occupy the key positions in this historical series, beginning with the central symbol of the first novel — a ring.

In the last novels the question is about the receiver of the ring and the bearer of the message: "When the Schmerzburgs die, what would then happen to the Emperor and to the State?"

When talking about Ristikivi, we should once again stress the fact that he was a political exile, who escaped from Estonia in 1944. Thus, his sense of duty, the eternal wanderer and the wandering knight are all related to his actual "lost home". As an exile, Ristikivi finds his lost home in Europe; as a believer, Ristikivi seeks an eternal home, as in the analogy to Bunyan's pilgrim. The narrator of *Rooma päevik* confirms: "The robe of a pilgrim would fit me better, for I have been travelling to find peace of heart."

In the novel *Lohehambad* one of the characters, a writer, refers to his works as a hermit's monologues. Ristikivi himself also shared the fear that the writer is a hermit of modern times, whose talk is a monologue aimed at deaf ears. Ristikivi's last novel moves in the larger space of world literature, burgeoning with intertextual connections with the writer's oeuvre as a whole and with European literary space. The whole of Ristikivi's historical cycle belongs in the larger context of the modern novel, as one fertile and fertilizing possibility. Though connected with the cycle as a whole, *Rooma päevik* is an independent work like all of the writer's 13 novels, and thus open as well to autonomous interpretation. Ristikivi's novels carry messages about the journeys of us all, and of the lack of a final journey back from exile.

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Die Schule des Dichtens: Einige Aspekte der deutschen Biedermeierlyrik

AIGI HEERO

Die literarische Situation in der ersten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts in Deutschland erweist sich als äußerst interessant. Die ersten Jahrzehnte dieser Ära gehören zweifellos der Klassik und Romantik. Was jedoch die Literatur in der Zeit nach dem "Ende der Kunstperiode" (so Heinrich Heines Definition der Zeit nach Goethe und Schiller) betrifft, ändert sich die literarische Landschaft gründlich. Eine ganze Generation von Schriftstellern fühlte sich schöpferisch als Nachzügler und litt permanent unter dem Gefühl des zu spät gekommen Seins, denn die mächtigen Vorbilder jüngster Vergangenheit waren allen noch sehr präsent. Man hatte das Gefühl, nach Goethe und Schiller ist es unmöglich, qualitativ hochwertige Literatur zu schaffen. Deshalb neigte diese literarische Epoche mehr zum Kleinen und Privaten, pries die Heimat, lobte die Familie, besonders die Mutter als deren emotionale Mitte und wertete die Religiosität stark auf. (Sengle 1971: 48–83) Gewiss wurde die Wahl solcher Themen auch durch die allgemeine politische Situation, die durch das System Metternich, die Zensur, und das Verbot politischer Literatur äußerst brisant war, zum großen Teil bedingt. (Heero 2004: 195–199) Die sogenannte Biedermeierepoche, auch "Restaurationszeit" genannt, hat wirklich nur wenige Schriftsteller von wahrhaft dichterischer Größe hervorgebracht; zu nennen wären an dieser Stelle etwa Friedrich Hebbel (1813–1863), August von Platen (1796–1835), Annette von Droste-Hülshoff (1797–1848), Karl Leberecht Immermann (1796–1840), Adalbert Stifter (1805–1868). Doch das sind nur wenige Beispiele. Vielmehr sind diese Jahre geprägt durch das Aufkommen sogenannter

"Literatur für Jedermann" bzw. "gedruckter Dilettantenliteratur". (Sengle 1971: 98–99)

Man neigte des öfteren dazu, diese Periode der Biedermeierliteratur ohne weiteres abzuwerten, erst in jüngster Zeit begann die ernsthafte Beschäftigung auch mit den Vertretern dieser Art von Dichtung. Auch diese Studie will die Dilettantenliteratur nicht bloß kritisieren, sondern versucht der Frage nachzugehen, unter welchen Voraussetzungen sie überhaupt entstand, da sich in ihr ein wichtiger Abschnitt deutscher Kulturgeschichte widerspiegelt.

Generell wollte in der damaligen Literaturlandschaft jeder publizieren. Besonders die literarischen Taschenbücher und Almanache, die mehrmals pro Jahr, etwa zu Ostern und Weihnachten, erschienen, boten dazu reichlich Gelegenheit, indem sie angesichts der großen Konkurrenz alles publizierten, was angeboten wurde. In diesen hübsch gestalteten kleinformatigen Büchern wurden Texte verschiedener Art veröffentlicht, von Auszügen aus klassischen Werken bis zu dilettantischen Versen. Von manchen Kritikern wurden sie als "Krebsschaden unserer Zeit" bezeichnet — denn obwohl auch die ernsthaften Schriftsteller die Taschenbücher nicht verschmähten, blieb diese Publikationsform doch weitgehend die Domäne der schreibenden Dilettanten. (Klussmann 1998, Klussmann 1996: 92–94)

Was die literarischen Gattungen anbetrifft, steht die Lyrik in der Dilettantenliteratur zweifellos an erster Stelle. Es folgen weitere kleinere Formen wie Spruchdichtung oder in Versen geschriebene Rätsel, Prosa aber findet sich kaum Anklang. Daher werden in folgenden Ausführungen vorwiegend Beispiele aus der Lyrik untersucht.

Als ein weiteres wichtiges Charakteristikum und ein entscheidender Beweggrund dieser Literatur soll das Verschwinden der Grenze zwischen Literatur und Leben genannt werden. Auch wenn ein literarisch einigermaßen begabter Mensch keine öffentlichen Ambitionen hatte, schrieb er trotzdem, um sich seine Existenz auf diese Weise gewissermaßen zu bestätigen. Man beschäftigte sich mit diversen Dingen, und was man dabei empfand oder erlebte, hat man reflektiert und schriftlich den Mitmenschen mitgeteilt, was wieder auf das Leben zurückwirkte. (Sengle 1971: 99) Die Produkte solcher lyrischen Selbstbetrachtungen klangen etwa wie das Gedicht aus der Sammlung *Feyerklänge. Geistliche Lieder und Gebete von zweyen Predigern Süderdithmarschens*:

Es rast der Sturm, es brausen rings die Wogen,
Der Nachen schwankt auf wildempörter Fluth [sic],
Der Sterne Licht verglimmt am Himmelsbogen,
Es leuchtet nur des Blitzes rothe [sic] Glut;
Die Spiegelfläche hat auch mir gelogen,
Mich packt des Ungewitters blinde Wuth [sic]
Und schleudert mich, als vielwillkommne Beute,
Hinaus in klippenvolle Meeresweite. (*Literatur-Blatt* Nr. 2 1826: 8)

Dieses Gedicht in der Form klassischer deutscher Stanze verstößt kein einziges Mal gegen die metrischen Vorgaben. Doch wenn auch die Form tadellos ist, die dichterischen Bilder verraten inhaltliche Leere, die auch durch die leidenschaftliche Pathetik nicht überdeckt wird. Aber das Lesepublikum nahm solche Dichtungen meist wohlwollend auf. Das Qualitätsgefühl der Leser war gering, nicht nur wegen des wachsenden Zustroms wenig gebildeter, kleinbürgerlicher Leser, sondern auch weil das "Rohe", "Spontane" und "Ungekünstelte" generell geschätzt wurde. "Jacob Grimms Lehre von einer unbewußt entstehenden Volks- und Naturpoesie (...) verfestigt sich zu einer Doktrin und zerstört in einem immer weiteren Bereich der literarischen Welt die Maßstäbe und das künstlerische Ethos." (Sengle 1971: 99) Natürlich gab es solche Art von Dilettantismus auch schon in der Goethezeit. In der Biedermeierepoche erreicht die gedruckte Dilettantenliteratur den ersten Höhepunkt: Die Zahl erstrangiger Schriftsteller war gering und die leer gebliebenen Stellen nahmen die Amateure ein. Das Dichten war nicht mehr nur die Gewohnheit und Modelaune der Baronessen und Hoffräulein, sondern der ganzen sich schnell ausbreitenden Bildungsschicht. (ib. 100)

Die Dilettantendichtung ist noch durch ein weiteres Charakteristikum zu bestimmen. Beim genauen Betrachten der von Amateuren geschriebenen lyrischen Texte fällt dem geübten Leser ein ganz bestimmtes dichterisches Muster ins Auge. Es scheint, dass eine Vielzahl der Dichter ganz deutlich in ihren Dichtungen auf andere Schriftsteller Bezug nimmt, vorzugsweise sind das die deutschen Klassiker. Dies sind teilweise verdeckte oder umgewandelte Zitate, manchmal aber auch direkte Bezüge. Dabei wird das Zitat nicht gekennzeichnet.

Ein simples Beispiel zeigt, daß solches (wie wir es heute nennen würden) Plagiieren damals als durchaus übliche und ernsthafte Praxis

galt. Dies lässt sich am Gedicht Friedrich von Schillers *Würde der Frauen* erläutern. Es fängt mit folgenden Worten an:

> Ehret die Frauen, sie flechten und weben
> Himmlische Rosen ins irdische Leben,
> Flechten der Liebe beglückendes Band
> und, in der Grazie züchtigem Schleier,
> Nähren sie wachsam das ewige Feuer
> Schöner Gefühle mit heiliger Hand. (Schiller 1992: 185)

Das *Literatur-Blatt*, eine periodische Ausgabe, in der die literarischen Neuerscheinungen bekannt gemacht und rezensiert wurden, druckte im März 1824 ein Freimaurergedicht ab, das mit folgenden Zeilen anfing:

> Ehret die Männer! die zirkeln und bauen,
> Rüstig im Tempel die Weisheit erschauen;
> Stehn um den Erdkreis in heiligem Bund. (*Literatur-Blatt* Nr 22 1824: 86)

Im Juni 1826 dagegen zitiert das *Literatur-Blatt* aus einem Gedicht der Sammlung *Phantasieblüthen und Tändeleyen von Cathinka Halein*:

> Fliehet die Männer! sie flechten und weben
> Dornen und Disteln in's irdische Leben. (*Literatur-Blatt* Nr. 52 1826: 201)

Und noch ein Beispiel, diesmal aus dem Gedichtheft eines Schülers. Dort findet sich ein Gedicht mit dem Titel *Würde der Greise*, der wie folgt, anfängt:

> Ehret die Greise: sie wußten zu leben
> Wußten des Irrdischen Schiksals zu erstreben
> Und in der Fakel feuerischer Mitte
> Jugendlich glühn die wankelnden Tritte
> Und die Adern [sic] wallt feurig und süß. (Heero 2003: 278)

Das Schiller- Zitat bildet hier den Ausgangspunkt und die Konzeption weiterer Gedichte. Die Dichter geben Schillers Strophe fast wortgetreu wieder, nur der Sinn wird durch die Substitution von einzelnen Elementen ("Frauen" werden durch "Männer" bzw. "Greise" ersetzt) geändert. (Plett 1988: 316) Demnach vollzieht sich hier eine *Nachbildung* — das neue Gedicht eines Autors wird einer Vorlage

thematisch nachempfunden, dabei wird jedoch ein individueller Bezug eingebaut. (Adel 1972: 240) Das Ergebnis ist vergleichbar mit einem *Mimotext*, der dieselben stilistischen Merkmale wie das Original enthalten soll, jedoch möglichst ohne wörtliche Anleihen. (Genette 1993: 115–116) Auch ist es möglich, über ein *Formzitat* zu reden, da die Form eines Gedichts übernommen worden ist. (Adel 1972: 241)

Es lassen sich noch viele weitere Beispiele dieser Art anführen. Deshalb kann an dieser Stelle festgehalten werden, dass etwa um die 20er und 30er Jahre des 19. Jahrhunderts eine ganze Generation von Literaten herangewachsen war, die das Dichten, das Schaffen von Literatur in gewisser Weise als etwas Handwerkliches bzw. Mechanisches ansah. Die meisten dieser Dichtungen sind technisch perfekt, inhaltlich wird jedoch die Abhängigkeit von den literarischen Vorbildern deutlich, bis zum Versuch, die dichterischen Arbeiten des Vorbilds bewusst nachzuahmen. Das Dichten war zu einer handwerklichen Kunst, einer erlernbaren Fertigkeit geworden.

Die plausibelste Erklärung für die Entstehung dieser Literatur sind die späten Wirkungen der preußischen Bildungsreform (1812), die die allgemeine Schulpflicht für alle Gesellschaftsschichten einführte und den Weg für den auf neuhumanistischen Prinzipien beruhenden Literaturunterricht an deutschen Gymnasien bereitete. Daher ist es wichtig, im Folgenden einen Überblick über die damalige Schulordnung und insbesondere über die Grundlagen des Literaturunterrichts zu geben.

Die große preußische Bildungsreform wurde in der allgemeinen Freiheitsbegeisterung und in der nationalen Aufbruchstimmung nach dem Ende der Napoleon-Ära durchgeführt. Gleichzeitig war diese Reform vom Erbe des alten, absolutistischen Preußens geprägt. Die Probleme eines solchen Systems waren in Preußen deutlicher als anderswo zu beobachten: Monarchie, Adel und Bürokratie rangen um die Macht im Staat. So sollten die preußischen Reformen — die Erneuerung der einzelnen Lebensbereiche im Gesamtzusammenhang — einen neuen Staat und eine neue Gesellschaft ins Leben rufen. In diesem Kontext gewann die Bildungsreform eine besondere Bedeutung, da die Erneuerung des Staates und der Gesellschaft eine Erneuerung der Menschen voraussetzte, und es dazu einer neuen Erziehung bedurfte. (Nipperdey 1983: 57, Wehler1996: 284–292)

Diese neue Auffassung von Erziehung und Wissenschaft, die sich nun durchsetzte, gründete sich auf dem Idealismus und dem Neu-

humanismus. Der Grundgedanke des Idealismus heißt: Erziehung muß zur Selbstbestimmung erziehen und nicht zur Einpassung in die Traditionswelt, nicht bloß Kenntnisse vermitteln, sondern auch abstrahierende Einsichten. Die Bildung ist somit nicht auf Beruf und Stand bezogen, sie ist allgemein, national, ihr Ziel ist die Erziehung des ganzen Volkes. (Nipperdey 1983: 57)

Der Neuhumanismus richtete sich negativ gegen die leicht trivial gewordenen Ideen der Aufklärung (d.h. gegen Verständigkeit und Nützlichkeit). Das neue Konzept erhebt die Individualität zum Mittelpunkt. Die Bildung ist die "allseitige und harmonische Entfaltung der individuellen Anlagen — von innen heraus und durch Aneignung der Welt — zu einem Ganzen und Eigentümlichen, der Persönlichkeit; Individualität, Universalität, Totalität (die Ganzheit) sind die Leitkategorien. Damit verwirklicht der Einzelne die Humanität, die Idee der Menschheit. Diese Bildung (...) wird darum auch zum Selbstzweck, zu einem höchsten Wert. (...) Und diese Bildung ist nicht ungestörte Entfaltung einer ursprünglichen Natur, sondern vollzieht sich im Medium der Kultur und des Buches." (ib. 58)

Dieses Prinzip wurde zumindest ansatzweise im Rahmen der Bildungsreform in die Tat umgesetzt. Das bedeutet, dass das reformierte Gymnasium sich programmatisch dem Neuhumanismus verpflichtete, was vor allem an den Lehrprogrammen deutlich wurde: Die alten Sprachen, die klassischen Stoffe, die formale Bildung hatten einen klaren Vorrang. Auch die humanistische Regelpoetik wurde, wie es bei Latein und Griechisch der Fall war, im Deutschunterricht angewendet. In der Aneignung des fremden Geistes und der mustergültigen Werke sollte der Geist der Schüler geweckt und erzogen werden. Dazu gehört die von Schiller neu beschriebene Theorie der Klassik. Demnach hat die Kunst eine fundamentale und moralische Bedeutung für das Leben: Kunst wird ein Teil der Bildung und dadurch ein natürlicher Teil des Lebens. Trotz progressiver Inhalte und wohlmeinender Intentionen, junge Menschen mit dem neuen, an der Antike trainierten Unterrichtsmodell zu Persönlichkeiten zu bilden, grassierte an den humanistischen Gymnasien bald eine anämische und elitär-restaurative Schulgelehrtheit und seelenloses Einpauken von antiquiertem Bildungswissen. (Weninger 1994: 157)

Im allgemeinen bedeutete dies, daß der muttersprachliche Unterricht in Deutschland sich von der Mitte des 17. bis zum Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts nach Inhalt und Methode unter der Autorität des

humanistischen Eloquentia-Ideals, als ein Studium von Mustern vollzog. Zunächst spielten die antiken Autoren dabei eine wesentliche Rolle, nach und nach wurden auch deutsche Dichter kanonisiert, als "klassisch" angesehen und damit als würdig genug, eine Vorbildfunktion für Schüler zu leisten.

Schon während der Spätaufklärung hatte man in den Schulen das Studium von Mustern als Geschmacksbildung und damit die Pflichtlektüre eingeführt. Es hatte didaktisch-moralische Gründe, sollte aber auch das Gefühl des "Schönen" vermitteln und schärfen, bei der Lektüre sollten die kritischen Fähigkeiten und das ästhetische Sensorium des Schülers sich entwickeln und festigen. (Jäger 1981: 15) Bildeten jedoch früher die lateinischen und französischen Schriftsteller das Musterbeispiel guter Lektüre, so wurden in der Zeit nach Napoleon die deutschen Klassiker immer mehr zum Kanon. Das war notwendig, um die Jugend "von der erbärmlichen Lektüre geist-und hirnloser Romane und Liebesgeschichten" (Jäger 1977: 18) abzuschrecken. Ausserdem sollte die Verbreitung und Volkstümlichkeit der Klassiker einen ‚Nationalgeschmack' schaffen, und die Klassiker zum Allgemeingut der Nation werden. (ib.) Der Unterricht in der Literaturgeschichte und Lektüre hatten somit die Aufgabe, eine Identifikation des Einzelnen mit dem Gesamtdeutschen hervorzurufen und damit den Charakter des Schülers zu formen.

An dieser Stelle darf man den praktischen Aspekt des muttersprachlichen Unterrichts nicht ausser Acht lassen: Die Beschäftigung mit den deutschen Schriftstellern gestaltete sich viel einfacher als mit den antiken Autoren, was wiederum einen direkten und natürlichen Zugang zur Literatur ermöglichte. Die Beschäftigung mit der Literatur, die früher als ein Privileg galt, war nichts Elitäres mehr, sondern etwas, was jedem als selbstverständlich zustand. Dies bewirkte auch das Gefühl, das zwischen Literatur und Leben kaum eine Grenze besteht.

Dabei müssen auch die formalen Aspekte des Literaturunterrichts bedacht werden. Man kann an dieser Stelle festhalten, dass der Literaturunterricht eigentlich mit dem Rhetorikunterricht gleichzusetzen ist: Die rhetorischen Übungen des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts bezogen sich oft auf literarische Gehalte. Eine Aneignung des fremden geistigen Gedankenguts richtete sich streng normativ nach den Regeln grammatisch-stilistischer Reinheit und poetischer Richtigkeit. Erst an den Beispielen der ‚wahren Dichter' wurde die Norm anschaulich, erst

an ihnen konnte die vollendete Musterhaftigkeit konkret aufgefaßt und nachgeahmt werden. Der Ursprung solcher dichterischer Anschauung geht auf Gottscheds "Critische Dichtkunst" zurück: Dieses Werk hatte großen Einfluss auf das poetologische Denken seiner und folgender Epochen. (Petersen 2000: 172) Laut Gottsched ist Dichtung stets die Nachahmung der Natur, von da an kam es zu einem selbstverständlichen und damit zu einem "gedankenlosen Gebrauch des Begriffs der Nachahmung als Bezeichnung für Dichtung." (ib. 183)

Die kanonisierte deutsche Literatur wurde somit in den Gymnasien am Anfang des 19. Jahrhunderts zunehmend im Rhetorikunterricht eingesetzt. Während der Spätaufklärung wurde zwar versucht, mit dem traditionellen Rhetorikunterricht auf der Basis des Lateinischen und des Griechischen zu brechen, diese Bemühungen waren jedoch nur von mäßigem Erfolg begleitet. Die Tradition des poetischen Unterrichts wurde "bruchlos in das 19. Jahrhundert hinein fortgesetzt," (Bosse 1978: 111) und die *exercitia poetica*, Dichtübungen, die ihre Wurzeln in der Barockrhetorik haben, in allen Gymnasien praktiziert. Zweck dieser Übungen war, poetische Fertigkeiten einzuüben, d. h. im weiteren Sinne, gut schreiben und sich ausdrücken zu lernen.

Der Schüler wurde im muttersprachlichen Unterricht nicht nur in die literarische Formenwelt eingeführt, sondern er erhielt die Gelegenheit, sich "in allen privaten, geselligen, beruflichen und öffentlichen schriftlichen (...) Verkehrsformen seiner Zeit auszubilden." (Jäger 1981: 138) Viele Übungsaufgaben hatten somit direkte praktische Bezüge: Dem Schüler wurde beigebracht, wie man Freundschaftsbriefe, Vollmachten, Danksagungen, Bittschriften usw. verfaßt. (Ib.) Diese Aufgaben wurden schon in den Schulen der Spätaufklärung praktiziert, in dieser Zeit sogar mehr als literarische Übungen, um auch den Nichtstudierenden und insbesondere den Handwerkern aus niederen Gesellschaftsschichten entgegenzukommen. (Ib. 17) Alle diese Formen gingen auf tradierte Schemata zurück.

Ähnlich verhält es sich auch mit dem Dichten. Eine Reihe von Aufgaben machten die Schüler mit Techniken bekannt, wodurch die Schüler die Machart der literarischen Produkte kennen lernten und dabei die eigenen sprachlichen Fähigkeiten ausbilden konnten. Es handelte sich hauptsächlich um metrische Übungen, die bis zur Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts zu den Pflichtaufgaben eines Gymnasiasten gehörten. (Bosse 1978: 90–91, Jäger 1981: 141–143) Die Techniken

solcher Übungen wurden u.a. von dem Unterrichtstheoretiker Heinrich Viehoff (im Jahr 1843) beschrieben.

Die Schüler sollten nach Viehoff im Literaturunterricht zuerst ein Äquivalent einer Vorlage produzieren, indem diese in eine andere Versart umgewandelt wurde: "Man stelle z. B. den Schülern die Aufgabe, die Erzählung (...) fünffüßige Jamben umzuwandeln, bei möglichster Schonung des Inhaltes." (Viehoff 1843a: 129) Weiter empfiehlt Viehoff eine Übersetzung in deutsche reimlose fünffüßige Jamben, und zwar aus den englischen und französischen Dramen. Hier ist zu beachten, dass die Zeiten sich 1843 schon geändert haben dürften. Davor wurden solche Übersetzungen sicherlich noch zwischen Griechisch, Latein und Deutsch praktiziert.

Die nächste wichtige Übung wäre Viehoff zufolge, "einige in poetischer Prosa abgefaßte Stellen zur Bearbeitung in heroischem oder elegischem Versmaß aufzugeben. Hierzu eignen sich besonders prosaisch geschriebene Idyllen, wie die von *Geßner*." (Ib. 134) (Gemeint ist Salomon Geßner, ein Dichter des 18. Jahrhunderts.) In der Praxis sah diese Übung etwa folgendermaßen aus. Eine Passage aus Geßners Idylle *An Daphnen* lautet:

> O wenn die frohen Lieder dir gefielen, die meine Muse oft den Hirten abhorcht! Auch oft belauschet sie in dichten Hainen, der Bäume Nymphen und den Ziegenfüß'gen Wald-Gott, und Schilfbekränzte Nymphen in den Grotten; (Geßner 1777: 14)

Die Adaption eines Gymnasiasten aus Zwickau bezeugt ein durchaus hohes sprachliches Geschick:

> Gefielen dir doch meine frohen Lieder,
> Die meine Muse von den Hirten leiht:
> Oft lauscht sie in den grünbelaubten Hainen
> Dem Gott des Waldes mit den Ziegenbeinen[,]
> Den schilfbekränzten Nymphen in der Grotte. (Zit. nach Heero 2003: 185)

Die fortgeschrittenen Schüler könnten laut Viehoff auch schon versuchen, "eine angemessene Stelle aus einer der philosophischen Abhandlungen von Schiller zu versifizieren geben." (Viehoff 1843a: 136)

Das sind nur einige Beispiele, denn es gibt eine Vielzahl von solchen Übungen. Interessant ist, dass solche Übungen heute etwas

wie eine Renaissance erleben und wiederholt im Literaturunterricht eingesetzt werden.

Spätestens jetzt stellt sich die Frage nach den eigenen Dichtungen des Schülers. Diese lehnt Viehoff strikt ab: "Ich bin nicht dafür, namentlich nicht für lyrische freie Arbeiten. Man verleitet dadurch gar zu leicht zum Spielen und Schönthun mit Gefühlen und gewöhnt an Schein und Unwahrheit." (Ib. 156–157)

Damit ist die Situation klar umrissen: Den Lehrplänen zufolge wurde den Schülern kaum kreative Freiheiten gestattet, und die poetischen Versuche, die in mehreren Schulen als ein obligatorischer Unterrichtsstoff galten, sollten somit stets einen Rückbezug auf vorliegende Schemata haben. (Jäger 1981: 143–144) Dies galt aber nicht nur den Gedichten. Auch bei Vorträgen und Aufsätzen wurde die Wahl der Themen eingegrenzt und die Behandlung des Stoffes sollte möglichst "richtigen" Argumentationsmustern folgen. (Viehoff 1843b: 68).

Wir fassen zusammen: Die rhetorischen Übungen, die ihre Wurzeln in Barockrhetorik haben, wurden in der Spätaufklärung und in der Goethezeit auf der Basis des Lateinischen durchgeführt. Deshalb verfassten viele Schriftsteller jener Zeit ihr ersten Gedichte in der lateinischen Sprache. Friedrich von Schiller (1759–1805) etwa schrieb als Schüler in Ludwigsburg (in den Jahren 1768–1772) lateinische "Carmina", noch bevor er auf Deutsch zu dichten begann. (Schillers Biografie 2005: [1]) Über Christoph Martin Wieland (1733–1813) ist aber bekannt, dass er schon sehr früh eine ausserordentliche sprachliche Begabung aufwies und als 8-Jähriger lateinische Verse verfasste. (Wielands Biografie 2005: [2]) Im 19. Jahrhundert änderte sich die Situation grundlegend. Durch die Schulreform und die allgemeine Schulpflicht wurde die Bildung für breite Schichten erreichbar, was bei der Entstehung eines selbstbewussten Bürgertums eine entscheidende Rolle spielte. In den Schulen widmeten die Lehrpläne der Muttersprache und der deutschen Literatur eine besonders starke Aufmerksamkeit. Ein wichtiger Teil des Literaturunterrichts waren die poetischen Übungen, um die sprachlichen Fertigkeiten eines Schülers auszubilden. Das heisst, man hat als Schüler das Handwerkzeug erworben, mit dessen Hilfe man später über sich, seine Gedanken, sein Leben dichterisch reflektieren und den anderen seine "Herzergießungen", in eine hübsche Form gegossen, mitteilen konnte und zwar in der eigener Muttersprache. Dazu kam,

dass die neuen wirtschaftlichen und technischen Verhältnisse jedem Mensch Gelegenheit zum Publizieren boten. Die Literatur, das Dichten, das früher als Privileg einiger Auserwählter galt, bekam eine andere Dimension: Jeder, der sich als Dichter fühlte, konnte auch literarische Werke im wahrsten Sinn des Wortes "Produzieren". Und es gab von solchen Poeten nicht wenig. Man könnte sogar von einer generellen "Vermassung" der Literatur sprechen, was sich beispielsweise auch in der Vorliebe zu den verschiedenen Gedichtzyklen und langen Romanen niederschlägt. Diese Situation nimmt Wilhelm Müller (1794–1827), Verfasser der Liedtexte der "Winterreise" (Franz Schuberts Liederzyklus op.89) in seinem Epigramm Nr. 100 in ironischem Ton zusammen:

> Schreiber, was bemühst du dich, immer gut zu schreiben?
> Liest dich denn ein jeder gut? Treib's wie's alle treiben.
> (Müller 1830: 365)

Doch nicht nur das. Wie schon erwähnt, schrieb der literarische Konservatismus im Gymnasium der Restaurationszeit einem Schüler die korrekte Form eines Textes und dessen gedanklichen Inhalt vor, die Bezüge auf eine kanonisierte Literatur ließen einen Text als qualitativ hochwertig erscheinen. Somit wurde Zitieren der eigenen Klassiker zu einem obligatorischen Merkmal der deutschen bürgerlichen Bildung, nachgerade zum Statussymbol. (Pick 1962/63: 275) Dies spiegelte sich auch im Alltagsleben des Bürgertums in allen möglichen Nuancen wider. Wer in seiner Rede, in seinem Brief oder in seiner Tagebuchaufzeichnung etwas durch das Zitieren ausdrückte, zeigte sich als Weltmann und bezeugte seine exzellente Allgemeinbildung. Es kam in Mode, im alltäglichen Sprachgebrauch deutsche Klassiker zu zitieren, was relativ schnell einen ausufernden Charakter annahm. "They [Bürgerliche] had a veritable ‚Bildungshunger', formed a cohesive reading public, (...) loved poetry, were enthusiastic play-goers, and delighted in quotation, which they used as ‚Scheidemünze', small change, of their daily intercourse." (Ib.) Viele Klassikersätze wurden so zu den tradierten "geflügelten Worten" und schlichen sich in die Umgangssprache ein. (Heute weiss kaum jemand, dass feste Wendungen wie z.B. "Tu was du nicht lassen kannst!" oder "Ich habe meine Schuldigkeit getan!" den Werken Lessings bzw. Schillers entstammen.) Dieses Phänomen parodiert

beispielsweise E. T. A. Hoffmann in seinem Roman *Lebensansichten des Katers Murr* vorzüglich. (Meyer 1988: 23 und 114–134)

Wichtig ist jedoch hierbei zu vermerken, dass es in dieser Zeit nicht nur "gedruckte Dilettantenliteratur" gab. Vielen ernsthaften Schriftstellern jener Zeit war die Ambivalenz ihrer Epoche durchaus bewusst. Sie kritisierten stark das Aufkommen der Dilettantenliteratur, indem sie sich bemühten, qualitativ hochwertige literarische Arbeiten zu verfassen, gleichzeitig konnten sie aber nicht ihr geistiges Erbe und ihre schulische Bildung ablegen. So schimmert etwa in den Dichtungen Ernst Schulzes (1789–1817) oder Ludwig Gotthard Kosegartens (1758–1818) deutlich der neuhumanistische Imitationsunterricht durch. Besonders die Gedichte Schulzes weisen eine tiefe Verwurzelung in dem sog. "Biedermeierklassizismus" (Sengle 1971: 251–256). Seine Sonette, Balladen, Verserzählungen und insbesondere Stanzen zeichnen sich durch eine sehr klare und technisch perfekte Form aus. Jedoch ist es Schulze gelungen, nicht nur die Form seiner literarischen Arbeit zu perfektionieren, sondern auch einen eigenen lyrischen Ton zu finden, weshalb er als eine "Zusammenstellung des gewaltigen antikisch-deutschen Sängers mit einem romantischen Poeten" (Pfeiffer-Belli 1971: 221) bezeichnet wurde. Am folgenden Beispiel aus Schulzes Poem "Die bezauberte Rose" können wir seine poetische Verfahrensweise erkennen: Technische Vollkommenheit (in diesem Fall eine metrisch korrekte klassische deutsche Stanze) kombiniert mit gelungenen dichterischen Bildern.

> Dies sang ich dir, als mit der ersten Rose
> Auch mir ein Lenz der neuen Freud' erschien;
> Doch tückisch mischt das Schicksal seine Loose,
> Ein weißes zeigt's, wenn wir ein schwarzes ziehn.
> So ruht auch jetzt schon unter kühlem Moose,
> Die freundlich mir die kurze Lust verliehn
> Und mir ist nichts aus jener Zeit geblieben,
> Als nur dies Lied, mein Leiden und mein Lieben.
> (Schulze 1822: 350)

Noch klassizistischer erscheint aber die Dichtung Kosegartens. Während Schulze vorwiegend doch mit moderneren dichterischen Formen operiert, verwendet Kosegarten nachgerade ausschließlich antike Strophen und Versmaße. Auch vom Inhalt her zeigt seine Lyrik eine nahe Verwandtschaft mit griechischen bzw. lateinischen

klassischen Dichtungen. Sein hymnisches Gedicht "Sunium" etwa beschreibt eine idyllische Landschaft, wobei die Bilder, Metapher und feste Attribute antiker Lyrik (Flur, See, Nachtigall) in seinen Text einfließen:

> Deine Fluren sind schön, o Sunium. Deine Gebüsche
> Schatten so kühlend; so frisch duftet der Kalmus des See's.
> Horch, wie die Nachtigall schlägt in der blüthenregenden Wildniß.
> Schau, wie die güldene Saat wogt das Gelände hinan.
> Gellend erschallt aus dem goldenen Bett die Flöte der Wachtel; (Kosegarten 1827: 122)

Diese klassizistische Verskultur, die noch andere Autoren der Biedermeierzeit auszeichnet, wäre ohne den neuhumanistischen Literaturunterricht nicht möglich gewesen. (Jäger 1981: 141) Auffallend ist jedoch, dass weder Schulze noch Kosegarten ihre literarischen Arbeiten als bewusste Nachahmung musterhafter Werke beschreiben. Wahrscheinlich hat dies mit dem klassischen Konzept der literarischen Nachahmung, d.h. mit der bewussten Übernahme antiker poetischen Modelle zu tun. Die Imitation antiker Werke ist demnach kein Erstellen der Kopie einer Vorlage, es geht darum, ähnliche Effekte zu erzielen. (Petersen 2000: 217) Kosegarten und Schulze ist dies durchaus gelungen. Aber schon einige Jahre später nahmen die etwas später geborenen Dichter ihre Werke kritisch unter die Lupe und stellen fest, dass es bei vielen um eine bloße Adaption dichterischer Vorbilder geht. Die Nachahmung gilt bei der neueren Generation als Schimpfwort, als ein Zeichen der schöpferischen Schwäche und nicht als eine poetologische Kategorie. (Ib. 232)

Als gutes Beispiel hierfür dient ein Tagebuchnotiz des jung verstorbenen Dichters Wilhem Waiblinger (1804–1830). Waiblinger war sich der Epigonalität seiner Jugendgedichte bewußt, wie aus einer Tagebuchaufzeichnung hervorgeht:

> Der Nachahmungstrieb ist einer der Unverschämtesten und Gewaltsamsten. Unvermerkt, ohne es nur zu wollen, hat man gewisse Eigentümlichkeiten, gewisse originelle Züge eines geschätzten Individuums angenommen. So geht mirs im Style mit Jacobischen

> Construkzionen, mit Hölderlinschen Wortfügungen, wie mirs ehemals mit Göthes Werther und Wahrheit und Dichtung, mit Wieland begegnete. So hab ich auch im Aeussern, je nach der Einwirkung der Lagen und Umstände, in verschiedenen Stimmungen, verschiedene Manieren von andern angenommen. (Waiblinger 1956: 267)

An diesen Beispielen sehen wir, dass, wie so oft in dieser Zeit, die Bestrebungen der Dichter zweigeteilt waren: Einerseits war man versucht, etwas Eigenes zu schaffen, andererseits standen die mächtigen Poeten aus der Vergangenheit als Maßstäbe für gutes Dichten immer noch fest. Diesem Zwiespalt zwischen Bewegung und Beharren ist die meiste Lyrik des frühen 19. Jahrhunderts entsprungen.

Noch einen Schritt weiter geht Karl Leberecht Immermann. Mit seinem Roman *Epigonen* prägte er den Begriff des Nachgeborenen, der seine Situation als erdrückend empfindet. Ein Epigone hat ein Erbe zu tragen, das zu schwer ist, um ihm zu eigenen schöpferischen Aussagen zu verhelfen, er ist nicht mehr der Nachgeborene im ursprünglichen, biologischen Sinne, sondern ein unschöpferischer Nachahmer. (Windfuhr 1959: 185–186, Undusk 1997: 341–343) In diesem Roman erhebt Immermann die Nachahmung zum literarischen Programm. Er stellt die Epigonalität als ein Objekt der Betrachtung und Reflexion dar, d.h. er untersucht dieses Phänomen und stellt es in verschiedenen Variationen literarisch dar. Er nimmt etwa Bezug auf Goethes "Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre" und flicht noch weitere goethesche Motive in seinen Text ein. (Kamann 1994: 45–66 und 117–119) Damit entwirft er ein ästhetisches Programm der bewussten Epigonalität. Aus heutiger Sicht verwirklicht Immermann in seinem Werk eine Kombination aus Literaturproduktion und Literaturrezeption, denn der Text seines Romans entsteht zunächst zum großen Teil aus einer Vorlage. (Jurt 2003: 118) Die Lektüre Goethes wird weiter zu einer Metapher einer bestimmter Form der Werkinterpretation, ihre Thematisierung stellt die Literatur in ihrer Reflexivität dar. Der Autor ist demnach nicht nur Autor, er ist auch Leser, der seine Lektüre beschreibt (Jurt 2003: 119), indem er (um Kristevas Begriff zu verwenden) eine Transposition eines Zeichensystems in ein anderes vornimmt und dadurch eine mehrschichtige Intertextualität erreicht. (Kristeva 1978: 69) Trotzdem sieht Immermann als Fazit die

neue Dichtergeneration ganz im Sinne der Romantik als zu schwach, um etwas Originales in die Welt zu bringen. Daher erscheint die Epigonalität in diesem Roman nicht selten als eine Krankheit, eine Abirrung. (Kamann 1994: 118) Weiterhin erscheint die Epigonalität in Form von Münzen, d.h. als etwas Austauschbares. In den *Epigonen* sagt Wilhelmi:

> Wir sind, um in *einem* Worte das Ganze Elend auszusprechen, Epigonen, und tragen an der Last, die jeder Erb- und Nachgeborenschaft anzukleben pflegt. Die große Bewegung im Reiche des Geistes, welche unsre Väter von ihren Hütten und Hüttchen aus unternahmen, hat uns eine Menge Schätzen zugeführt, welche nun auf allen Markttischen ausliegen. Ohne sonderliche Anstrengung vermag auch die geringe Fähigkeit wenigstens die Scheidemünze jeder Kunst und Wissenschaft zu erwerben. (...) Aus dieser Bereitwilligkeit der himmlischen Göttin gegen jeden Dummkopf ist eine ganz eigentümliche Verderbnis des Worts entstanden. (Immermann 1981: 118–119)

In diesen Worten zeigt sich die ganze Tragik einer Epoche. Die dichtende Gesellschaft spaltete sich in die Intelligenz, die permanent unter dem Gefühl litt, zu spät geboren zu sein und in das aufkommende, selbstbewußte Bürgertum, das sich mit der Dilettantenliteratur zufrieden gab. Die gesamte Dichtergeneration hatte eine ambivalente Beziehung zu ihrer Zeit.

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The Price of Leaving the Anonymity of a "Small Literature". Vladimir Bartol, *Alamut*, 1938

SIMONA ŠKRABEC

Present-day life has taught us to understand and even to need the awareness of simultaneity. In the introduction to his well-known book on the concept of the nation, Benedict Anderson shows very clearly the strong influence of newspapers on our vision of the world. The date printed on the front page of a newspaper is the only thing we need in order to link together the various events described in its pages for a specific day. But it is sad to see how, when the here-and-now becomes history, the link represented by a date becomes more and more blurred and memory becomes more and more selective. Recalling that difficult period of great political and social upheaval in the early nineteenth century, we immediately think of Lord Byron or Heinrich Heine, but Mickiewicz, Słowacki, Kraiński, Petöfi, Kollár and Mácha seem not to belong to this history, not only because they lived in isolated parts of Europe but also because it is as if they had existed in an entirely different era.

Meeting points between different cultures — the way of arranging histories one on top of the other, or one beside the other, so that they touch or overlap in the manner of a palimpsest — have become essential. It is simply unconceivable to consider the contemporary world without taking into account everything that exists outside the frontiers of the identity of a person or a place. A good example that confirms this statement is the melting pot represented by Vienna at the end of the nineteenth century.

Alongside the city at the height of its splendour that is described in the works of Arthur Schnitzler there was also the poverty-stricken

Vienna that Ivan Cankar portrayed in his novel *The Ward of Our Lady of Mercy*. The historical reality he tried to recreate is not told to the reader directly but through the narratives of twelve ailing youngsters who from the confines of a children's home describe the world outside. This vision of Vienna contrasts with everything else that had been created in Austrian literature at the time. The greatest contrast lies in the fact that it is a vision of someone who feels a stranger, the vision of someone who is unable to describe the world first-hand because it is inaccessible to him and he forms no part of it.

A handful of destinies, imprisoned in a ward, are a clear metaphor for life being inaccessible to a writer. Life and reality seem not to exist; writers have access to it only through memory and are able to reproduce past experiences only through narrative. Nobody leaves that ward, unless they have died.

The contrast between this vision of Vienna and the one that Austrian writers had of the city is enriching. But in order to make the comparison all we need to do is extract just a small part of the organic fabric that is Cankar's specific literary output. In order to take into account the intercultural context, clearly demonstrated by the structure of Vienna in the early years of the twentieth century, we would have to ignore the fact that the writer had his roots in a different culture, as well as the continuity of motifs and themes that appeared in the works of Slovenian writers who had no connection at all with Austrian literature.

It is revealing to examine works that the various literatures produced about a common place, particularly in the case of something so interesting as the life of the city cited as an example. Emblematic cities, such as Vienna or Prague, have become genuine common places, *topoi* that are recognisable to the whole of Western civilisation. It is for this reason that Vienna is able to resist this enrichment with visions from outside. We must realise, however, that the intercultural approach is possible precisely because we have a *topos* that we are able to enrich. This is like realising that Kafka and Hašek had lived in the same city and that in the Prague of the early twentieth century Hašek's laughter and Kafka's tears stared each other in the face.

But the fact of holding the world in the palm of one's hand has brought with it a new form of obfuscation. The procedure illustrated with the above examples might seem a valid way of enriching the supply of "world literature"; the core themes can expand the corpus of

works we consider it necessary to know as part of a common, comparable tradition. But this same procedure can lead us to produce a new mythology from which everything historical is erased and the *topos* becomes the sole justification for it. Let us look at a frankly disturbing case that could also be called the price for leaving the anonymity of a small culture: the case of Vladimir Bartol and his novel *Alamut,* set in Persia in the year 1092.

Milestones on the road to the international stage

In September 1967, the writer Vladimir Bartol died in Ljubljana after a long illness. He had been born in 1903 in Sveti Ivan, near Trieste, and had read biology and philosophy at the University of Ljubljana. He obtained a scholarship to study at the Sorbonne in Paris, worked as a proof-reader on Slovenian literary reviews in Trieste, and translated Nietzsche; he also wrote the play *Lopez,* which was published and first performed in 1932, a book of short stories titled *Al Araf* in 1935, and *Alamut* in 1938. This novel was translated into Czech in 1946 and into Serbian in 1954, and twenty years after it first appeared a second Slovenian edition was published in 1958, which was an unusual event in such a limited market and such difficult times.

Bartol's initial urge to write faded quickly after the Second World War, despite having lived in the Slovenian capital, and his literary influence ceased to make itself felt. *Al Araf,* which was brought out again in 1974, after his death, under the title *Demon and Eros,* also failed to make much of an impression in the country.

But in 1984 everything was to change. *Don Lorenzo,* a story written sixty years earlier and rewritten several times since, and the novel *Miracle in the Village* were both finally published, followed shortly afterwards by a third edition of *Alamut,* all of which gave rise to a succession of articles and critical reviews. The leaders of this rediscovery of an author who had never before received any acclaim, even in the small area of his own national literature, were a number of young literary critics who found in Bartol something that Slovenian literature seemed unable to offer: an *avant la lettre* post-modernist writer. From this enthusiastic reaction emerged the idea that Bartol was "the only Slovenian writer who could also be of significance

worldwide" (Bratovž 1991: 9), and as if by magic the oracle was to a certain extent right in his prediction of the future.

The year 1988 saw the publication in Slovenia of the fourth edition of *Alamut* as well as a collection of short stories that had previously been published between 1935 and 1940 in the pages of a Trieste review: *Between Idyll and Horror,* which was accompanied by no less than six introductory essays included in the same volume. This was also the year of the French translation of *Alamut* published by Phébus and the appearance of the book on Bernard Pivot's popular TV programme "Lire" on Antenne 2. The door to the stage of world literature seemed to have opened not only for the author but for everything this novel represented. But things did not turn out quite so well.

"The Brussels newspaper *Le Soir* started off a brief comment on the book with the epoch-making declaration that Slovenian literature existed. Literally. *Ah, les Belges!*" (ib. 10) was Marko Crnkovič's wry observation on this ephemeral fame that came to a rapid end, not least because of the reference to the author's country of origin. Even today, the idea still persists that Bartol was ignored and unknown precisely because of having chosen the wrong language, as if one were free to choose the ethnic community one belonged to; as if only one language existed in and around Trieste, which was insufficient to afford the right to an identity. This is the unfortunate truth.

The setting for a historical novel

Bartol constantly repeated that the situation described in the novel was based on historical facts, reconstructed from careful research over many years. *Alamut,* according to him, was a reliable, erudite, scientific work.

The first researchers who investigated his work fell right into the trap. The author had made it known that the books by orientalists that he had consulted before the war in the National Library in Ljubljana had been destroyed in a fire that had broken out in the building, and until 1990 nobody had been to the library to check whether this was true. Nobody questioned the value of the reference material cited by the author as compared with the state of current research work. Then Janko Kos (ib. 9–53), through a painstaking piece of detective work,

not only discovered that the thick volumes by Gustav Weil, John Malcolm, Gustau Flügl, Joseph François Muchaud and Friedrich Spiegel, all written during the nineteenth century, were still held in the library but also that certain pages of these books contained notes in Bartol's handwriting.

The books that Bartol had consulted in order to describe the band of assassins cannot be considered today as reliable sources for that far-off period in history. The same can be said of the use of Persian literature, the themes taken from it and the quotations appearing in the novel. Bartol had at his disposal a very limited number of translations and he used these to give the novel the necessary patina of local colour in order to make the setting more credible.

In addition to using sources of doubtful scientific value and over a century old, he had selected from them facts and conclusions that not even nineteenth-century historians considered to be accurate. Hasan ibn Sabbah al-Razi and his followers in the sect of Shiite Ismailis were called assassins by the West centuries ago and are not some discovery by Bartol. The black legend began to form part of stories of Croats and of Marco Polo's description of the fortress of Alamut, according to which the members of this sect were drugged with hashish and sent out on dangerous missions, prepared to give their lives. Bartol was well acquainted with the first great explorer's accounts of oriental lands and in fact it was this that encouraged him to write the novel (Vidmar 1985).

The description given by Bartol of the religious, political and social movements in Persian society from the eighth to the twelfth centuries is far from reliable and is in fact considered a fallacious view. But the writer precisely needed this particular vision of Ismailism rather than any other, for he was not interested in disproving an ancient black legend. In this novel, historical accuracy is not of importance. Bartol simply concocted a common place that was sufficiently well known.

The subject-matter he chose was thus of importance only if behind the example of the Ismailis there were some other intention. Was the difficult period of the second half of the 1930s perhaps the real target of his pen?

Nihilism reduced to a threatening finger

Bartol wrote *Alamut* in 1938. The author showed in his literary output a barely disguised admiration for great historical figures. Like many other intellectuals around Europe, in 1938 Bartol admired those who were able to grasp the reins of history. He admired men who were capable of *amor fati*, men for whom destiny was not inevitable but could be altered at will.

He had been blinded by the "will for power" that Nietzsche spoke of in his writings on philosophy, though understood exclusively as a licence to dispense with all compassion, all consideration, along the road that leads to a higher purpose. From today's perspective, the brutal consequences of this interpretation of superman are very evident. The Nazi ideology appropriated the thoughts of this philosopher in such a way that it saw the Movement as the force that would transform the world and change all values. The Nazis used unimaginably absurd and unimaginably brutal procedures to differentiate people "biologically" in order to ensure that on the planet of the future there would only be room for a superior being. But we should not forget that in 1938 very few people had realised or were concerned about the dimensions that the Nazi movement was beginning to acquire. Dachau prison camp, for example, had been open since 1933, but who realised the consequences that its policy of extreme repression was to have in the following years? Who wondered what Nietzsche's philosophy had to do with the ideology behind this brutality?

Bartol did not ask himself that question. His admiration for the maxims taken from Nietzsche's works remained within the horizons drawn in Slovenia by one of the most influential literary critics of the time, Josip Vidmar. In 1926, Vidmar wrote: "Man has a single duty; though this is not, as you might think, to be 'good' but to know his own nature in order to realise himself to the full, whether as a 'good' man or as a 'bad' man. What matters is being an imposing personality." (Kos 2001: 150) Since he was a literary critic, this moral indulgence should come as no surprise to us. In fact, Vidmar never wanted to get involved in philosophical issues and his field of activity was limited exclusively to literature. This also explains his admiration for cruel, despotic characters, since he moved within the strict confines of art. With his liking for figures inspired by Nietzsche's

superman, he called for no more and no less than the autonomy of art. He insisted that tyrants and despots should appear in novels and plays and that the value of any work should not depend on its moral rectitude, or in other words on the victory of the principle of goodness.

The importance of Nietzsche's ideas in establishing a sphere of autonomous art cannot be underestimated. Bartol, too, is an heir to this struggle, and the fanatical leader of a religious sect benefits from the indulgence with which we judge literary works today. Nobody is horrified that people of this nature should emerge from the pages of a book. Literature is full of Raskolnikovs wielding a chopper, and always has been. In books we find that space for reflection which allows us to consider the ultimate consequences without any fear of being offended.

Alamut by Bartol presents us above all with a philosophical problem, closely linked to the interpretation of the philosophy of Nietzsche. In the fourth part of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* we find the quotation that Bartol gives as the dictum of the Ismailis: "Nothing is true, everything is permitted." The motto of Islamic fighters comes therefore from a book from which Bartol had translated and published extracts precisely at the time of the gestation of his novel. However, Nietzsche said these words not to Zarathustra but to his shadow. The shadow is the incarnation of the weak side of man, a part on which Zarathustra had to turn his back in order to continue to be faithful to himself. The thoughts that arise in the domains of the shadow must be overcome in order to open up the way for the new man to carry out the task of revaluing all values.

Bartol's speculative horizon gives no hint of the extent of the revaluation but merely shows a hypothetical society in which everything would be permitted. His Hasan stands for scepticism and an amoral freedom as the ultimate degree that the mind is able to imagine or formulate.

He was well acquainted with another work in which morals are a central issue, *The Brothers Karamazov* by Dostoyevsky. "If God does not exist, everything is permitted," are the words that the author puts in the mouth of Ivan Karamazov, and the sentence was used by Bartol to draw a clear conclusion: "If God disappears, his principles have disappeared. For a believer, God is truth, so if there is no God there is no truth. Hence the conclusion that if nothing is true, everything is permitted, is a logical one." (Bratovž 1991: 44)

But with the kiss that Alyosha plants on Ivan's lips, Dostoyevsky seals the terrible prophecy of the Grand Inquisitor of Seville, plagiarising Jesus's gesture. This is the gesture that has been repeated throughout the history of mankind in order to ward off threats of blind violence and the abuse of power. But it is neither love nor Christian faith that symbolises this gesture that is able to disarm even the most powerful of men. The most effective resistance to any attempt at domination is individual revolt.

This attitude exemplifies each person's ability to accept their cosmic responsibility and allows a glimpse of a horizon on which man would be able to distinguish between good and evil without the need for any transcendental force. If a new era is to be born in which mankind would be able to handle earthly assumptions despite being aware that God has died, then man would have to be able to assume individual responsibility: the responsibility that Alyosha accepts by plagiarising Jesus's kiss.

On the other hand, Bartol's combining of Dostoyevsky and Nietzsche in an unequivocal motto is certainly problematic. Firstly, because Nietzsche is a philosopher who is able to think well beyond the sceptical affirmation that without God nothing can be done; and secondly, because Dostoyevsky did not write a novel that can be summed up in a motto. *The Brothers Karamazov* reveals the author's ability to construct a Dialogue in which, without taking into consideration the different points of view, without admitting that there is a violent confrontation between two diametrically opposed positions, we cannot even start to discuss the novel. In this confrontation between two positions, love and freedom are the shields that act as the defence against nothingness.

Bartol was certainly aware of Dostoyevsky's narrative technique that was analysed in such detail by Mikhail Bakhtin under the name of a "polyphonic novel". We can see how the story of *Al Araf* causes a confrontation between the teacher, Dr. Krassowitz, and his even more naïve pupil. But instead of letting each one's point of view clash with the other, the personal letters conceal a narrator who painstakingly explains why things had to develop in a particular way, following a preconceived plan. We cannot consider Krassowitz's opinions as part of a fully qualified awareness of his own world. This character is a mute slave of the author rather than a free man like Dostoyevsky's characters. Krassowitz is merely a mask for tendentious opinions and

the whole episode is simply an *exemplum* of the conviction that people must first suffer a deep personal deception in order to serve as leaders of a people, prepared to die if necessary.

We can therefore conclude that Bartol only partly understood the issue of nihilism. It is difficult to reproach the author of a novel written in 1938 for not having realised the final consequences that a totalitarian regime could lead to and for having allowed himself to be carried away by the cult of an "imposing personality". But of much more concern is the fact that in the twenty-first century this novel can be read in a totally unconcerned way without any thought as to what sort of defence we need against nothingness. What can ensure the goodness of men today?

The "legitimate" defence of the weak

Nihilism has another important component that we are able to approach thanks to Bartol. In the nineteenth century, the "non-historical" peoples of Europe became increasingly aware that it was necessary to establish solid foundations of their identity in order to have a place in universal history. But the question of whether or not a people is able to provide evidence of its own historical tradition soon became an issue of a very different nature (Holquist 1977). For anyone wishing to consider themselves modern, it became a pre-requisite not to have a past, to live without any need for roots in history. Because if there is no transcendental system that can ensure order, it is the people themselves who have to create their own system of values. Casting doubt on the truths established by religion, Dostoyevsky questioned sacred history and with it any other kind of history. "The Inquisitor simply doesn't believe in God," replies Alyosha in *The Brothers Karamazov.*

This statement is proof of the discontinuity in which modern man lives and it offers a very different look at the continuity of time, at the way in which history is written. Thanks to this conception of the past, the instant becomes more important than the sequence; what matters is *kairos* rather than *chronos.* The conflict between the instant and the sequence was to mark all discussions on the subject of modernity, and this is because modernity exists in the form of a desire to achieve the

point that we might call the absolute present, the origin that marks a new starting point.

Bartol shares this need to look at history in a new way and is able to question the explanation of the past as it has been transmitted to us through the Christian tradition. The fact that he was attracted to Islam was linked to the need to consider the past from another point of view, to find an alternative focus. However, this urge of his to question the established tradition has a highly specific content. In the same way as in Russian literature in the nineteenth century we find attempts to establish the history of a people who felt themselves excluded from European history, in the small territory between the Julian Alps and the Adriatic Sea everyone was trying frantically to do the same thing. In Slovenia everyone wanted to create a different history in which Slovenians would find their place. The destruction of the established models should also be an attempt to "correct" omissions. We can see, however, that in the case of Bartol these questions are not of a philosophical nature but are closely linked to the historical period in which he lived.

It should be remembered that Bartol was profoundly influenced by the most enigmatic philosopher of his native country, Klement Jug (Virk 1993). This philosopher and mountaineer preached and lived according to a radical ethic of his own that consisted in determining a clear goal and doing everything necessary to achieve it. Jug's ethic of "beyond good and evil" required an unconditional dedication to the proposed goal, and for this reason an action could not be considered as good or evil in itself alone but in accordance with the proposals marked by the established system of values.

Jug was also a mountaineer and he died on one of his hazardous expeditions to the Julian Alps, on the north face of the Triglav in 1924. This young philosopher influenced his circle of friends through the example of a life governed by strength of will, rather than through his works.

Klement Jug has even caused fatal accidents with his teaching! The school teachers who consider that over half the fatal accidents in the mountains in recent years are the direct consequence of his *school* are right. So many precious young lives have been lost in this way! And when the Bazovica tragedy occurred, they exclaimed, "There you are! All because of Jug's teaching and philosophy!" But I put this question to you: have we never before had a relevant figure who has

propounded a single idea able to make young people act in this way; able to put an end to their resignation and give them the will to take fate in their own hands; who helped them overcome the fear of death? (Bartol 2004: 171)

Bartol's admiration for a philosopher who proclaimed the man of action as an absolute value is conditioned by the circumstances in which Slovenians lived in the region of Trieste from 1918 up to the end of the Second World War.

The city of Trieste was the largest port in the Austro-Hungarian empire. With the fall of Austria in the First World War, Italy was able to take advantage of the victory and demonstrate its strength with the acquisition of new territories. The 1915 Treaty of London and the Rapallo Convention of 1920 established a geopolitical frontier that instead of respecting the different peoples living in the region took as the boundary the watershed dividing the rivers flowing into the Adriatic from those flowing into the Black Sea. This was how a quarter of Slovenian ethnic territory came under Italian rule during the inter-war years. This domination was the most traumatic experience the region had ever known. Instead of living under a plurinational monarchy that respected diversity to a greater or lesser degree, Slovenians became part of a state in which the most radically uniformist tendencies were soon to hold sway. On 13 July 1920, fascists set fire to the Slovenian Cultural Centre in Trieste. It was an ominous portent of the violence that awaited this region in the following decades in an attempt to erase all traces of the people who inhabited the area. Except in the city of Trieste itself, and to a lesser extent in a few other towns or villages, only Slovenians lived in this region.

It was against this background that a secret organisation was set up to unite Croats and Slovenes in the struggle against the pressure of absorption by the Italians: TIGR (Trst/Trieste, Istra/Istria, Gorica/Gorizia, Rijeka/Fiume). This organisation represented the core of the anti-fascist front and the resistance during the Second World War. But during the 1930s it made use of terrorist methods and its actions led to fierce repression. In addition to numerous prison sentences and other measures, ten of its members were condemned to death and executed.

The will for power was for Bartol a fundamental characteristic of an oppressed minority such as the Slovenians at the time the novel was written. The philosophical questions about an imposing perso-

nality became for him a matter of how to change the national character. Bartol reproached his people for their submissive spirit and considered that throughout their history Slovenians had lived with their backs bent. "Mediocre people get nowhere; we have always been a mediocre people and willing to compromise," he wrote.

The metaphorical value of the mountaineers prepared to die on some inhospitable crag is the fearless struggle against foreign occupation. The will for power is here, in Bartol's novel — a radical will to preserve the existence of a people and their freedom.

Bartol's revolutionary aims are therefore not very different from the ideas we find in other books of the same period, such as the novels by Prežihov Voranc steeped in social realism (Paternu 2004). But what is today's attitude to the revolutionary content of all these works?

To a certain extent Europe has today recovered the serenity we find in Cankar's reflections at the beginning of the twentieth century in *The Spring Night:*

> Human nature is divided into two great aspirations that are continually opposed to each other: the first is revolution, the second is police surveillance. Sometimes the revolution wins, and a moment later there are the police. And the struggle between the two is called the history of mankind. The Gods go on dying and others go on being born, and the new ones are distinguished from the earlier ones by the clothes they wear. (Cankar 1967: vol. IV, 163)

An assessment of the ideological content of *Alamut* is part of the complex process of historical review of the recent past that affected the ex-communist countries after the fall of the Iron Curtain. We need to review the old revolutionary slogans that were repeated in order to justify the proletarian dictatorship or the struggle for national freedom. But we must tread carefully, so that this review does not erase the evidence of the violence of the fascist and Nazi regimes.

During the 1980s, when Bartol's literature underwent a period of rediscovery in Slovenia, one of the country's most influential writers wrote a play about the controversial philosopher Klement Jug. The principal character in *The Fall of Klement* (1988) by Drago Jančar was reluctant to become part of society and wanted to remain a loner, totally responsible for all his own actions.

Nonetheless, Klement's *amor* fati is merely one of the points of view that the audience were able to contemplate on the stage. The "certainty that things had to happen this way" is strongly questioned by the attitudes of the other characters in the play. Milka's love in particular has the strength to suspend such a radical position. Milka is aware that she has to accept life as it comes, with all its meanness, stupidity and conventionalisms; but finally only she will be able to feel real sorrow after the death of Klement. All those who admired him so much will allow Klement to become everyman's hero. Future generations will trivialise his words and his convictions.

The proclamation of the independence of Slovenia in 1991 was preceded by intense intellectual debate, and the play about Klement could be said to form part of it. Its author, Drago Jančar, was one of the most persistent voices in explaining the hopes and expectations of the Slovenians. The political proposals calling for independence were widely supported by society in general and represented a clear break from the revolutionary spirit of the 1930s. The refusal to use force proved to be a highly effective instrument for achieving the goals that had been set. Not only Slovenia but all the velvet revolutions in Central Europe that led to a peaceful transition from communism show how it is possible to achieve a profound transformation of society without the use of arms. For this reason, the message proclaimed in *Alamut* is quite simply a false one, and can only serve as justification for the armed struggle.

But on the other hand we can see that Jančar's play represents an interesting updating of Bartol's literature. At the same time it will remain entirely unknown along the road that the novel about the fortress of Alamut has yet to travel among the international public. And so *Alamut* will continue showing almost didactically the consequences of an absence of all values, which allows us to assert that the success of the novel is precisely the limitation on philosophical speculation.

Both in his short stories and in *Alamut* the principal character is generally an educated man, a philosopher or a spiritual leader who enlightens the world with his categorical pronouncements. This gives Bartol's literature a false aura of intellectuality. The scope of his philosophical reflections is limited — and precisely for this reason his writing is suitable for the general public.

Reception in terms of the present day

Alamut has become an uncomfortable image of our times, when we are prepared to still believe in the historical accuracy of a *topos* that has been unmasked time and time again. It is not surprising that in 2004 the American translator of the novel wrote in his Afterword: "The author's gift for populating this setting with sympathetic, complex, and contemporary-seeming personalities, whose aspirations and fears resonate for the reader at a level that transcends the stock expectations of the exotic scenic décor, make this historically focused reading of the novel particularly lifelike and poignant." (Biggins 2004) I can hardly imagine any more detailed instructions for ensuring that readers are convinced about the historical accuracy of what they will be reading in Bartol's book. The eleventh-century Islamic fortress is not, according to this opinion, a stage but the way in which we should now "understand" the history of the peoples of the Middle East. One does not have to wonder about the real causes of Islamic terrorism today, because it is obvious that this area is a region of atavistic conflicts.

If even translations of unknown writers are to serve simply to promote the point of view in America of an omnipresent orientalism, there is really very little hope of the "clash of civilisations" coming to an end soon. The translator, Michael Biggins, also takes precautions against anyone interpreting the book as a *roman-à-clef* for some other society outside the Islamic world. "Slovenian nationalist reading" seems to him to be simply "facile and flat". So we should forget where *Alamut* came from and where it was created.

In Bartol's novel there is no philosophical reflection on nihilism that can even come close to the speculations made by Heidegger during the same period. For this reason there can be no hint of irony, in other words no conscious, deliberate distancing from the small fictional world of the novel. No, the novel is written from a position of profound admiration for a figure such as Hasan, the founder of a religious sect who is capable of training suicide troops. But it is precisely because this admiration is sincere and heartfelt that the writer is able to create a credible literary universe. Moreover, Bartol has thought out in great detail all the elements that would be necessary for a system that is able to produce "dagger-men", and he gets it right.

With Bartol's story it is as if in the pages of the book we come across that bogeyman whom we were taught to fear above everything else. This is why journalists mention his name every time there is some serious incident in the Middle East. There is no trace in the book of that trust that Nietzsche placed in man alone, able to distinguish between good and evil without the need for a God whom he fears sufficiently to make him behave always as he should.

We have seen the complexity of the philosophical debate that this book is able to generate. But it is difficult to maintain that behind the copies sold there is a reception of this kind. It is a novel that is read as a piece of popular culture, in other words with the reader mechanically identifying with the characters. And this is a frightening conclusion.

With the naivety of tradesmen concerned solely with the formula that enables the goods to be sold, Bartol's book has been published under the banner of portraying the real dangers of fundamentalism, with the particular plus point that it reveals precisely the world of Islam. This is certainly what leads most readers to buy the book, but we will also find others who allow themselves to be carried away by admiration for a hard, intransigent figure who knows no bounds. And there are likely to be those, too, who see this fable as a story of oppressed peoples fighting for their rights. Because of this, the printers produce yet more copies that are read and understood to a greater or lesser extent. I do not think their readers have a particular ability to understand another culture, for we now know in considerable detail the limited extent to which Bartol was faithful to the historical reality of the society he took as an example. Readers understand, though only intuitively, the fears and the mechanisms of *our* culture, a culture that is stamped with Nietzsche's thinking, that is uneasy when confronted with the provocations of Dostoyevsky's novels.

How many other works have not managed to find their way onto the international market following this same pattern? Can one imagine the success of *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* if the situation beyond the Iron Curtain were not a *topos* that needed to be fed with new contributions, more in line with the times, not so rigidly black and white as during the first years of the invented wall, but still clearly respecting the insurmountable chasm that forced people to choose between repression and exile?

I am obviously doing an injustice to Kundera by reducing his novel to just this one aspect, but playing the role of the dissident was for a time essential if one came from a communist country.

Twenty years after his discovery by the rest of the world, we can state that Bartol has become a kind of "universal" author. It has nothing to do with his presence in the literary markets of the great European languages with the idea of a *Weltliteratur* that Goethe had dreamed of. Bartol, totally detached from the culture in which he was born, without a single critic able to evaluate the context to which he belonged, is at the mercy of journalists and readers avid for stories. Rather than a literary author, Bartol is an anonymous minstrel who sings old legends. Within the impressive structure that is literature as an institution — with its critics, university lecturers, textbooks and authors consecrated by a rigid canon — the transmission of the legacy that recalls the time before the written word, the time of the oral tradition, still survives today. Thanks to a wandering minstrel we have all heard of Frankenstein, but we have forgotten the name of the balladeer who had told us about the monster's existence; we know about vampires, but nothing about the person who related their story. The same applies to Bartol's *Alamut*. Maybe there needs to be a film, produced in America, to highlight the vision of the Islamic world converted into a pure *topos* for the imprint of an author's pen to finally disappear. But even without this we can say that the price of emerging from the anonymity of a literature of limited diffusion is to descend into anonymity. There is a cosmopolitan space in which stories circulate freely but not the context in which each of them is set.

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Atwood's 'Muse': In the '[Grand]mother's Mirror'

RAMA KUNDU

I am the old woman
sitting across from you on the bus,
her shoulders drawn up like a shawl;
out of her eyes come secret
hatpins, destroying
the walls, the ceiling

Turn, look down:
There is no city;
this is the centre of a forest...

("A Bus along St Clair: December", *The Journals of Susanna Moodie)*

Here Margaret Atwood envisions in the figure of "the old woman" a visionary/ muse who can transport one's mind from the cramping material immediacy to an exciting release into mystery, signified by the wild forest. This is a poem from the section called "Journal III", and the author tells us, "Most of Journal III was written after I had come across a little-known photograph of Susanna Moodie as a mad-looking and very elderly lady" (*JSM* 63). In another poem of the same section the same "very elderly lady" gives voice to her mysterious vision of an oncoming metamorphosis. Her grandchildren can little guess how under the façade of "deafness", "cameo brooch", "puckered mind/ scurrying in its old burrows" she carries the potential for a mystic transmigration right into the springs of life and energy, when she

... will prowl and slink
in crystal darkness
among the stalactite roots, with new
formed plumage
uncorroded
gold and
Fiery green, my fingers
curving and scaled, my
opal
no
eyes glowing
("Wish: Metamorphosis...").

For centuries, and millenniums, we have spoken of 'ancestors', but not of 'ancestresses'. It is this foremother or ancestress, in place of 'forefather' or 'ancestor' , who has been emerging as a new icon in *ecriture feminine* across the globe today, Canada and India being no exception. Helene Cixous would say: "a woman is never far from 'mother'... there is always within her at least a little of that good mother's milk. She writes in white ink" (Cixous 1976). Indeed, this reminds us of what Virginia Woolf had said nearly half a century ago, in *A Room of One's Own*: "We think back through our mothers if we are women" (83). Margaret Atwood's concept of "muse" can be understood in this light. As the poet explains in an interview:

> I myself always thought the muse was female... If the muse is a woman for the woman poet, unless the poet is a lesbian, the sexual connection gets removed, and it's more like a second self, a twin, a mother, a wise old woman... That's how we learn to speak, usually from our mothers (Sullivan 1998: 108).

Apparently Atwood does not seem to be very definite about this 'second self'. She can be a sister ("Twin"), mother, or some "old" -er and "wiser" woman, that is, one who has suffered more and experienced more. But in whatever image she may surface times and again, it is basically the idea of an 'other' woman within the writer who seems to motivate, inspire, and mould her writing. As one goes through Atwood's poems one feels how this 'other' within the self becomes increasingly a conglomerate image which becomes a

contraction and coinciding point of generations of women. One may cite the following lines from "Five Poems for Grandmothers":

> Sons branch out, but
> one woman leads to another.
> Finally I know you
> through your daughters,
> my mother, her sisters,
> and through myself.
> (*Selected Poems II*, 14)

This assertion — or better to say, wishful thinking — of a common heritage, of a matrilineal line of ancestry[1] and belonging may have been prompted by the author's perception of the woman's alienation, even as a writer. While the male poets in their common journey enjoy a degree of sharing, the women remain isolated; this is how Atwood

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1. Way back in 1932 Dorothy Livesay (b. 1909) makes a loving, nostalgic invocation to the 'grandmother' in her poem "Green Rain". As memory surges back, the image of the grandmother becomes the overwhelming sign of all that had been dear and treasured:

> I remember long veils of green rain
> Feathered like the shawl of my grandmother...
> I remember the road...
> ... which leads to my grandmother's house,
> A warm house...
> And the silence, full of the rain's falling
> Was like my grandmother's parlour
> Alive with herself and her voice, rising and falling--
> Rain and wind intermingled. ...
> Now I remember the day
> As I remember my grandmother.
> I remember the rain as the feathery fringe of her shawl.
> [*The New Oxford Book of Canadian Verse* . 134]

It may also be interesting to recall in this context the following lines from Sylvia Plath's "All the Dead Dears" (*The Colossus*)

> From the mercury backed glass
> Mother, grandmother, great grandmother
> Reach me, hug hands to have me in.

perceives the "pilgrimage" in her poem "The Words Continue their Journey".

> I see us, travelling together,
> the women veiled and singly, with that inturned
> sight and the eyes averted,
> the men in groups, with their moustaches
> and passwords and bravado.
> (*Selected Poems II*, 116)

It is the urgency of overcoming this alienation that governs the poet's search for her own myth, which should recognize and acknowledge and project "the long thread" connecting mothers who had been daughters, to their dead mothers, and their growing daughters, who in their turn will be mothers to their daughters. As she writes in "A Red Shirt":

> This is the procession
> of old leathery mothers,...
> passing the work from hand to hand,
> mother to daughter,
> a long thread of red blood, not yet broken.
> (*Selected Poems II*, 48)

The image of "leather" in Atwood is associated with compulsive /enforced silence, — that of the woman burnt alive on the charge of witchery, "her mouth covered by leather/ to strangle words" ("Spelling", *True Stories*, 64). The mother in this poem envisions her daughter playing with plastic letters, "learning how to spell,/ spelling,/ how to make spells". She feels that the conventional education of grammar and spelling will be an incomplete lesson for her daughter; it would not help her tear the leather from the mouth. Instead, she must pass on to her another language of instinctive wisdom.

> At the point where language falls away
> from the hot bones, at the point
> where the rock breaks open and darkness
> flows out of it like blood.

The poem concludes with an exhortation to the small daughter for asserting her identity.

> How do you learn to spell?
> Blood, sky & the sun,
> your own name first,
> your first naming, your first name,
> your first word.

This is the wisdom, — the painful message to assert herself — that the mother can impart to her daughter, so that she can give her own fight when the time comes.

> I would like to say, Dance
> and be happy. Instead I will say
> in my *crone's* voice, Be [emphasis added]
> ruthless when you have to, tell
> the truth when you can,
> when you can see it.
> ("Solstice Poem", *Selected Poems II*)

The meaning of the figure of the "witch" or "crone" in Atwood's poems thus gets de-familiarized, and wrenched from their traditional/ conventional contexts. Mary Webster in "Half-Hanged Mary" speaks in the voice of a woman who has marginally averted death by hanging on charge of using witchcraft.

> Before, I was not a witch.
> But now I am one. ...
> I speak in tongues, ...
> The words boil out of me,
> Coil after coil of sinuous possibility.
> The cosmos unravels from my mouth,
> All fullness, all vacancy.
> (*Morning*)

Classical myths prove inadequate to meet the need of the situation. Atwood's Euridyce is the unrecognized alien, reduced to an "echo" by her lover; she accuses Orpheus: "You could not believe I was more than your echo" ("Orpheus" *Selected Poems II*). Helen is the fantasized and slandered whore, for whom the choice finally comes down to selling lures only.

Like preachers, I sell vision,
like perfume ads, desire
or its facsimile. ...
I sell men back their worst suspicions:
That everything's for sale,
And piecemeal.
("Helen of Troy does Counter Dancing", *Morning*)

Instead she finds in the traditionally despised, because feared, figures — the crone, the so-called witch, the old hag — the outspoken outcast, an appropriate icon of female wisdom. It is to this icon that she turns in her search for the matrilineal heritage, "the thread of blood" running down the endless line of mothers-daughters-mothers. The poetic muse thus becomes manifest to her in "the crone's voice", in the 'witch's' "tongues", in the wizened utterance of the old matriarch.

At this point one must take note of the fact that Atwood does not sentimentalize the much-lauded maternal instinct which is also a patriarchal construct, imposed in terms of "should[s]" and "should not[s]" to subjugate women, and to instill bad faith in them to embrace, without question, the role of the sacrificial heifer.

women should not contemplate war, ...
Women should march for peace,
or hand out white feathers to arouse bravery,
spit themselves on bayonets
to protect their babies...
or, having been raped repeatedly,
hang themselves with their own hair.
("The Loneliness of the Military Historian", *Morning*)

The poet draws out the subversive element in the folkloric myths which undermine the valorised myth of the self-effacing, self-sacrificing mother, in a poem which itself reads like an argument.

Of course there are mothers
squeezing their breasts
dry, pawning their bodies,
shedding teeth for their children,
or that's our fond belief.
But remember — Hansel
And Gretel were dumped in the forest
because their parents were starving.
("Red Fox", *Morning*)

The poet thus questions the 'institution' of motherhood along with its enforced roles on women.

Atwood's imagination is stirred by the figure of Susanna Moodie[2] because the woman, an "ancestress" to the Canadian woman writer, seems to represent the earthy female wisdom of the "crone" or the "witch" [in the Atwood sense] who has attained a mysterious communion with Nature and Life and Death. The "witch" or "crone" or "old Hag" becomes merged into the silent "unknown twin", who waits inside her brain, and gives solidity to her utterances. She is "The Signer"

> In an area of darkness behind my head
> stands a woman dressed in black,
> ... my unknown twin. ...
> In her hands, deft as a knitter's
> but quicker, my words turn solid,
> become a gesture, a skein,
> a semaphore of the body
> (*Morning*)

The shadow in the mirror is of the "unknown", yet instinctively known, being a "twin"; it is mysterious, yet part of the other twin's own self. Luce Irigaray proposes a feminist narcissism in order to subvert the power of patriarchy to hold the gaze in which woman is seen only as man would see her, in his image, or as a mirror reflection of his gaze. In the title section of her book *Speculum of the Other Woman* (trans.1985) Irigaray describes the central problematic of

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2. Elizabeth Brewster's(b. 1922) poem "Great-Aunt Rebecca"(1969) re-creates through "remembering" another Susanna Moodie figure, and evokes a grand mother figure of the pioneering generation who becomes the personal idol for her modern granddaughter:

> ... I too
> Wished to be a pioneer,
> To walk on snowshoes through remote pastures
> ... ; to be like Aunt Rebecca,
> Soft as silk and tough as that thin wire
> They use for snaring rabbits.
> [*The NOBCV* 224]

woman's attempt to resolve in harmony her female interconnections, and in this connection questions the validity of the antifeminist narcissism assumed by the Lacanian mirror:

> Are we to assume that a mirror has always already been inserted, and speculates every perception and conception of the world, with the exception of itself, whose reflection would only be a factor of time? Thus extension would always already be re-staged and re-projected by the subject who, alone, would not be situated there. Does the subject derive his power from the appropriation of this non-place of the mirror? And from speculation? And as speculation constitutes itself as such in this way, it cannot be analyzed (Irigaray 1985: 205).

Atwood refuses to allow this non-space in her 'mirror' to be appropriated; rather she would restore it to her 'unknown twin' who merges into the 'mother' who again merges into the 'grandmother', the 'crone', the 'witch'. Thus she takes up the "new challenge" which Irigaray tried to formulate in her thoughts on "Women's Exile" (1977).

> The fact remains: the relationship of women to their mothers and to other women — thus towards themselves — are subject to total narcissistic "black out"; these relationships are completely devalued. Indeed, I have never come across a woman who does not suffer from the problem of not being able to resolve in harmony, in the present system, her relationship with her mother and with other women. Psychoanalysis has totally mythologised and "censored" the positive value of these relationships (Irigaray 1977: 75).

Atwood's poems show an attempt at demythologising these relationships and restoring them to their positive value by means of invoking the female 'muse' as the mother, grandmother, ancestress, witch, crone, old hag, and one's 'unknown twin' sister in the 'mirror' of self-discovery, even if the progress towards the mirror[3], getting an access

3. Atwood's 'mirror' is distinct from the conventional psychiatrist's mirror [*a la* Lacan] or the aesthetic 'mirror game' of Durrell — his use of multiple mirrors towards achieving "prism-sightedness" by means of a continuous fracturing of perspectives.

to it, involves a tenuous and painful process. The first poem in the journals of Atwood's Susanna Moodie, "Disembarking at Quebec", shows the ancestress arriving at the perception of the inadequacy of a conventional mirror: "The moving water will not show me/ my reflection". The necessary dislocation in the life of an immigrant woman enables her to re-examine the validity of the inherited mirror, and leads subsequently to her rejection of "a mirror", and opting for the "wolf's eyes" instead ("Further Arrivals"). Eventually, after years of "roughing it up" in the lonely "wilderness", she stumbles upon her own mirror, and boldly grasps it, however unflattering it may be. The discussion may be concluded by citing the exclamation of the thrashed, stiffened, hardened figure of the foremother, — Susanna Moodie, — as she looks into her own mirror[4]; seven years in the prairie have led to crushed face, stained skin, stiff limbs, brittle fingers, cracked mouth; still it is important to look into the mirror.

One may also cite Sylvia Plath's poem "Mirror"(*Crossing the Water*)

> Now I am a lake. A woman bends over me,
> Searching my reaches for what she really is.

4. This can be compared and contrasted to the desperate groping of the hangman's bride in Atwood's poem "Marrying the Hangman" (1978) for any mirror which ultimately lands her up in a male mirror, and consequently,from one locked room to another.

> To live in prison is to live without mirrors. To live without mirrors is to live without the self. She is living selflessly, she finds a hole in the stone wall and on the other side of the wall a voice. The voice comes through darkness and has no voice. This voice becomes her mirror…
>
> What did she say when she discovered that she had left one locked room for another? [*The NOBCV* 352–54]

Mention may also be made to Jean Rhys's elaborate use of the 'mirror' as a trope in *Wide Sargasso Sea*(1966); Antoinette, living in her attic prison in Rochester's manor house is denied a mirror, and finds no answer to her obsessive puzzle: "Who am I?". Finally she gets the answer when in the mirror of the dream pool she recognises Tia, the black girlfriend of her childhood in the islands, "as if, I saw myself. Like in a looking glass" (38).

you find (in the mirror) only
the shape you already are
but what
if you have forgotten that
or discover you
have never known
("Looking in a Mirror", *Journal*).

Postscript: Atwood's 1976 novel *Lady Oracle*, a work acutely conscious as it is of its own status within the problematic category of 'women's writing', makes an elaborate use of the 'mirror'. The novel opens with Joan narrating in the past tense the events leading up to her own death.

> I planned my death carefully; unlike my life, which meandered along from one thing to another, despite my feeble efforts to control it. My life had a tendency to spread, to get flabby, to scroll and festoon like the frame of a baroque *mirror*, which came from following the line of least resistance. I wanted my death, by contrast, to be neat and simple (3; emphasis added).

The fantasy figure of 'Lady Oracle', — who is also the Joan's third "self", the other two being her self-chosen shapes of the slim attractive female, and the dull cook-cum-nurse — came into being as Joan pieced together words she had written during passages of self-hypnosis. Significantly, it is a mirror through which Joan enters the subterranean region of the 'lady oracle'; the mirror is, again, a replication of the three-sided mirror of her childhood, in which she had seen her mother as a hydra-headed "monster" (70). As Molly Hite rightly perceives, "The device of the mirror as entry suggests that the powerful, unhappy, somehow maternal persona of the poem is the reverse or repressed side of the 'happy and inept' persona (248) that Joan allows herself and is allowed by the society" (147). Joan remembers

> ... my mother always had a triple mirror, so she could see both sides as well as the front of her head. In the dream, as I watched, I suddenly realized that instead of three reflections she had three actual heads, which rose from her toweled shoulders on three separate necks. This did not frighten me, as it seemed merely a

> confirmation of something I had always known; ...her secret, the secret I alone knew: my mother was a monster (70).

Molly Hite comments:

> ... the mirrors that allow her mother to make herself into the requisite object of masculine desire, and thus to make herself into an exemplary mirror that will reflect back exactly what the phallocentric culture wishes to see, are transformed by the dream into portals leading to the revelation of feminine monstrosity, of woman as irreducibly multiple. In Joan's experiments with automatic writing, the triple mirrors lead into a labyrinth identified both with the unconscious and with the maternal (161).

In the nightmarish dystopian world of Atwood's 1985 novel, *The Handmaid's Tale*, where the women are reduced at gunpoint to the status of a mere breeding machine, mirrors have become scarce. The narrator finds one remaining mirror on the hall wall of the Commander's house, where she is being used as a 'womb'; she finds only a grotesque distortion there which but mocks herself.

> There remains a mirror, on the hall wall. ... I can see it as I go down the stairs, round, convex, a pier-glass, like the eye of a fish, and myself in it like a distorted shadow, a parody of something...(19).

The mirrors here , can show, in addition to the distorted self-image, sinister intrusions of oppressive outsiders into one's privacy. Even when 'Offred' rides up in the elevator towards the doctor's chamber, she is 'escorted' by the police spy. "In the black mirror wall of the elevator I can see the back of his head" (69). Or when the 'Commander's wife, desperate for a baby, forces 'Offred' to seek surreptitious copulation with a younger man, she sees "the two of us, a blue shape, a red shape, in the brief glass eye of the mirror as we descend. Myself, my obverse" (271). Only once she gets the chance of looking in an "ample mirror under the white light" in the exclusive brothel to which she is taken by the 'Commander', and in the "good look, slow and level" in the toilette mirror she learns , "I'm a wreck" (265).

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Blending Colo(u)rs: Seamus Heaney on American Poetry

REET SOOL

This article was occasioned by an international conference, *The Celtic Connection in North America*, held at the Renvall Institute for Area and Cultural Studies at the University of Helsinki in May, 2004. As the title indicates, comparative approaches were presupposed, and this explains the choice of the present topic.

As is generally accepted, the term Celtic is a linguistic one, "indicative of language, not of race", as pointed out by Professor Eoin MacNeill in his *Phrases of Irish History* (1919), (cited in Berresford Ellis 1992: 2). Accordingly, "A Celtic people are a people who speak, or were known to have spoken within modern historical times, a Celtic language." (Ib.). And if by language we do not mean a mere system of signs meant for communication, from which point of view the death of small weird old languages that are hard to learn and even harder to computerize would be a very welcome development in the technological era of ours, improving the efficiency of the functioning of the 'Totalmobilmachung', but instead think of language as the "house of Being" (as Heidegger put it — Heidegger 1975: 132), the place we feel at home, and homeless outside it, I feel the connection here is this — the English language, a West-Germanic language, that of the Angles, Saxons and Jutes, that ousted the Celtic languages (and the peoples who spoke these) to the margins of the British Isles, and, ultimately, did the same in Ireland, the same language at one point in history reached the New World (which by then was old and tired) and there, among other things, ousted the hundreds of native American languages. This is the crucial connection, as I see it.

Seamus Heaney, affected by modernist movement in England and America as, presumably, all Irish poetry after Yeats, and whose work

is generally thought of as containing signs of indebtedness to Robert Frost's poetry (e.g. Harmon 1997: 10), mentioned Frost in his Nobel speech in the following manner: "I loved Robert Frost for his farmer's accuracy and his wily down-to-earthness" (https://www.nobel.se/literature/laureates/1995/heaney-lecture.html). In the same breath, he admitted: "/…/ I went for years half-avoiding and half-resisting the opulence and extensiveness of poets as different as Wallace Stevens and Rainer Maria Rilke; crediting insufficiently the crystalline inwardness of Emily Dickinson, all those forked lightnings and fissures of association; and missing the visionary strangeness of Eliot." He doesn't mention Pound, though, who, as the latter remarked later in his life, was "drunk with Celticism", as in his early imitations of Yeats (cited in Columbia: 948). But returning to Frost, Heaney in "Frontiers of Writing" does mention his "The Gift Outright", and the line referring to America as "still unstoried, artless, unenhanced" as "Frost's unconscious erasure of native American stories and arts and enhancements" (Heaney 1995: 197). It should be pointed out in this connection, though, that Estonian students have always noticed this dismissive — call it colonial or postcolonial — attitude of Frost, and have commented upon it accordingly in our seminars of Native American literature at the University of Tartu. It may well be that speakers of small languages have a keener eye for such matters — one senses this both with regard to Celtic and Native American languages.

While commenting on Louis MacNeice and his 'extraterritorial fidelities', Heaney writes the following: "It was as if MacNeice combined within himself both the Yankee and the native American. He saw his Northern Ireland nativity — his given destiny, his bridgehead into reality — as something that was to be neither cancelled not defensively fortified. Like Hewitt, he grew up in pre-partitioned Ireland, but, unlike Hewitt, he did not allow the border to enter into his subsequent imaginings: his sense of cultural diversity and historical consequence within the country never congealed into a red and green map. In MacNeice's mind, the colours ran — or bled — into each other." (Heaney 1995: 198–99). A while later Heaney concludes: "He /MacNeice/ can be regarded as an Irish protestant writer with Anglocentric attitudes who managed to be faithful to his Ulster inheritance, his Irish affections and his English predilections", expressing hopes "for the evolution of a political order, one tolerant of

difference and capable of metamorphoses within all the multivalent possibilities of Irishness, Britishness, Europeanness, planetariness, creatureliness, whatever." (ib. 200). A while later, Heaney defines his own identity as a combination of Irishness and Britishness, growing up in the minority in Northern Ireland and being educated within the dominant British culture — those circumstances having emphasized rather than eroded his identity, to the effect of a desirable two-mindedness. He views the British dimension as a given in "our history and even of our geography, one of the places where we all live, willy-nilly. It's in the language" (ib. 202). Precisely the latter, the English language with its Anglo-Saxon undercurrents, marks the geography of his mind, its depths and widths, its alphabets, as in the opening poem of the collection *The Haw Lantern*, entitled, tellingly, "Alphabets". Its fourth stanza reads as follows:

> First it is 'copying out', and then 'English'
> Marked correct with a little leaning hoe.
> Smells of inkwells rise in the classroom hush.
> A globe in the window tilts like a coloured O.
> (Heaney 1987: 1)

However, there is something different there as well:

> For he was fostered next in a stricter school
> Named for the patron saint of the oak wood
> Where classes switched to the pealing of a bell
> And he left the Latin forum for the shade
>
> Of new calligraphy that felt like home.
> The letters of this alphabet were trees.
> The capitals were orchards in full bloom,
> The lines of script like briars coiled in ditches.
> (Ib. 2)

Of the two alphabets, it is the one used for writing in English that takes us to the United States, and its poetry. The year 1970/71 that Heaney spent in Berkeley, at the University of California, is characterized by biographers as liberating, the American experience adding scope and self-assurance to the poet. Since 1982, his present arrangement with Harvard University began, allowing him to stay in Ireland without teaching in exchange for one semester's work at Harvard. He is the Boylston professor of Rhetoric and Oratory there,

one of the university's most prestigious offices. Besides, he was Professor of Poetry at Oxford University (1989–1994).

As already mentioned, the modernist mode as it developed in the first decades of the 20th century English and American poetry affected strongly the Irish poetry written in the English language. Hence it is only natural that Heaney operates within this altered sensibility of poetry freely and confidently, drawing from its ample sources. This is the space full of echoes and reflections, veiled and unveiled citations, elaborate and learned theorizing. As it happens, he has modified the title of Eliot's famous essay of 1919, "Tradition and the Individual Talent" into "Tradition and *an* Individual Talent" as early as in 1972 on Hugh MacDiarmid, his English and Lallans (Heaney 1980: 195) — (emphasis mine). From then on, he has patiently and consistently been presenting his view of poetry, for which he found an apt title in "The Government of the Tongue. Selected Prose 1978–1987", containing also his T.S. Eliot Memorial Lectures, delivered in October 1986 at Eliot College, in the University of Kent. This emerging view, call it theory, if you wish, has a long tradition, going back to ancient Greece where poets were thought of as instruments in the hands of gods, mere media through whom the gods spoke. In its various forms and disguises, this view has survived to this day, culminating, among others, in the poststructuralist views of the death of the author. Discussing the nature of poetry and language, Martin Heidegger writes: "For, strictly, it is language that speaks. Man first speaks when, and only when, he responds to language by listening to its appeal. / … / But the responding in which man authentically listens to the appeal of language is that which speaks in the element of poetry." (Heidegger 1975: 216) Though modified and with no reference to Heidegger, Heaney's thinking of poetry at times follows the line of the German philosopher. Of the American poets that Heaney writes on, some form the constant framework (as Eliot — "Reading T.S. Eliot and reading about T.S. Eliot were equally formative experiences for my generation" (Heaney 1990: 91), also Pound, Frost, and Stevens), some have been reviewed on the occasion of their collected works, as Theodore Roethke (faber & faber, 1968), and others have been treated repeatedly and at great length — Robert Lowell, Sylvia Plath, Elizabeth Bishop. Here, especially while discussing Bishop and Plath's later work, her very last poems, in fact, he stresses "the poet's need to get beyond ego in order to become the voice of more than

autobiography. At the level of poetic speech, when this happens, sound and meaning rise like a tide out of language to carry individual utterance away upon a current stronger and deeper than the individual could have anticipated" (Ib. 148). He mentions Frost's ideas of 'the sound of sense', 'sentence sounds' and 'tones', certain profoundly true tones that 'were before words were, living in the cave of the mouth', previous to content and meaning, and quotes Eliot's formulation of 'the auditory imagination' as "the feeling for syllable and rhythm, penetrating far below the conscious levels of thought and feeling, invigorating every word; sinking to the most primitive and forgotten, returning to an origin and bringing something back ... fusing the most ancient and civilized mentalities" (cited ib.). This, according to Heaney, "also unites reader and poet and poem in an experience of enlargement, of getting beyond the confines of the first person singular, of widening the lens of receptivity until it reaches and is reached by the world beyond the self." (ib. 149). This, then, is the moment the language takes over, when the poet is spoken through, as Yeats, too, understood it. Heaney sees this happening in Plath's last poems, such as "Words" (written in February 1963), from which he has borrowed the line "The indefatigable hoof-taps" for the title of the closing chapter of his book, also "Edge". Those poems, written in England by an American poet, are really universal in the strict sense of the word, or ultimate, if you wish, where it is the language that speaks, not the woman, the kind Nietzsche once referred to as 'written in blood' ("Von allem Geschriebenen liebe ich nur Das, was einer mit seinem Blute schreibt" — Nietzsche 1930: 41). With Elizabeth Bishop, self-forgetfulness is there from the start, as Heaney puts it, she "was temperamentally inclined to believe in the government of the tongue — in the self-denying sense" (Heaney 1990: 101). The detailed analysis of "At the Fishhouses" testifies to this — "the self-possessed but not self-centred" (ib.) voice discreetly telling of things mundane, the earth and the sky above it, the meeting of land and sea, the old fisherman and his tools, a mortal toiling away beneath the sky, the domain of the immortals, thereby measuring himself against those, which is what is poetic about human dwelling (v. Heidegger 1975: 213–229). The tone of observant neutrality "swelling slowly as if considering spilling over", until it finally does so in "cold dark deep and absolutely clear,/element bearable to no mortal", pure poetry, confident and self-sufficient, saying the unsayable in a manner that

leaves the hidden intact in its secrecy, yet making it heard — all this in the truly North-American language (if not in the New England type of it).

In a way, by trying to tell about Heaney telling about American poetry, I was led astray — not in the sense Sweeney was (*Buile Shuibne*, translated into English by Heaney as *Sweeney Astray,* not as 'the frenzy' or 'madness' of Sweeney, which would be the literal translation of the title of the ancient Irish manuscript) — for from the Celtic point of view, he didn't stray from the right path or direction. That aside, the madness of Sweeney can be understood as a special insight that the mad and poets have. Seamus Heaney certainly possesses the latter, as did the American poets he dwelt on.

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Les poètes au miroir. Figures du poète et du lecteur dans *Kurja lilled* et *Väikesed kurja lilled* — deux versions des *Fleurs du mal* en estonien

KATRE TALVISTE

1. De la polyphonie vers une parole solitaire

«Le seul éloge que je sollicite pour ce livre est qu'on reconnaisse qu'il n'est pas un pur album, et qu'il a un commencement et une fin,» écrit Baudelaire à Alfred de Vigny au sujet des *Fleurs du mal,* en 1861 (Baudelaire 1973: 196), après avoir achevé la deuxième version du livre amputé quatre ans auparavant. Il n'est ni le seul ni le premier à revendiquer pour son ouvrage le statut d'ensemble réfléchi. Barbey d'Aurevilly avait commenté ainsi la première édition: « Nous ne pouvons ni ne voulons rien citer du recueil de poésies en question, et voici pourquoi: une pièce citée n'aurait que sa valeur individuelle, et il ne faut pas s'y méprendre, dans le livre de M. Baudelaire, chaque poésie a, de plus que la réussite des détails ou la fortune de la pensée, *une valeur très importante d'ensemble et de situation* qu'il ne faut pas lui faire perdre, en la détachant. [...] il y a ici *une architecture secrète,* un plan calculé par le poète, méditatif et volontaire. *Les Fleurs du mal* ne sont pas à la suite les unes des autres comme tant de morceaux lyriques, dispersés par l'inspiration, et ramassés dans un recueil sans d'autre raison que de les réunir. » (Articles ... 1975: 1196) Cette architecture qui se dresse entre le commencement et la fin des *Fleurs* a été étudiée par de nombreux critiques[1] et continue à être réinterprétée.

[1] Je me réfère surtout aux analyses de Pierre Brunel (Brunel et al. 1972: 478–486) et de James Lawler (1997).

Quelle que soit l'articulation proposée, l'idée de la cohérence et de l'unité du livre est devenue presque axiomatique dans la lecture de Baudelaire. Que devient ce livre dans un contexte très peu sensible à cette unité?

En estonien, la poésie de Baudelaire a longtemps été représentée uniquement par ce genre de citations, par les textes détachés et dispersés que Barbey d'Aurevilly voulait éviter. La première édition estonienne des *Fleurs du mal* (*Kurja lilled*) a paru en 1967, réunissant des textes de plusieurs traducteurs, afin de permettre au public de l'Estonie soviétique de retrouver l'œuvre de Baudelaire jusqu'alors inaccessible, connue surtout de lecteurs d'avant guerre ou partis en exil. Ce recueil a apparemment fondé une tradition qui n'a pas été abandonnée, même si les éditeurs ne sont plus soumis aux contraintes dont August Sang devait tenir compte à l'époque et qui sauraient expliquer, dans une certaine mesure, le contenu sélectif du recueil qu'il a établi. En 2000, une autre sélection des poèmes est parue sous le titre *Väikesed kurja lilled* (*Les Petites fleurs du mal*), et une troisième va bientôt paraître. L'intérêt continu pour cette pratique d'édition laisse penser qu'il y a sûrement d'autres raisons que, simplement, de réunir ce qui existe pour faciliter la lecture de Baudelaire au public. Mais je ne pose pas ici, au moins pas tout de suite, de questions sur les intentions des traducteurs ou des éditeurs. Ma question porte sur les conséquences: quels sont les nouveaux ensembles qui se constituent dans ces recueils malgré le peu d'attention qu'on a prêté à l'architecture originale du livre?

Dans le recueil *Kurja lilled,* qui contient des traductions de Johannes Semper, Ants Oras, Ilmar Laaban, August Sang, Ain Kaalep et Jaan Kross, on trouve 63 poèmes qui figurent dans *Les Fleurs du mal* (édition de 1861), 4 poèmes condamnés en 1857 et 6 poèmes qui datent des années 1860. Ces derniers forment la section *Nouvelles Fleurs du mal,* les quatre pièces condamnées sont insérées à leurs places respectives dans l'édition de 1857. La nouvelle composition est donc achevée d'une manière mécanique: Sang a généralement suivi la structure du livre, laissant de côté les poèmes dont il n'y avait pas de traduction. Indrek Hirv, éditeur de *Väikesed kurja lilled* qui contient des traductions (45 au total) de lui-même, d'Ants Oras et d'August Sang, a choisi un procédé plus compliqué. Comme Sang, il a créé la section *Nouvelles Fleurs du mal,* tout en supprimant la *Révolte.* Dans

les autres sections, les poèmes sont présentés dans un nouvel ordre[2]. Les deux procédés mènent pourtant au même résultat: la diminution de la dynamique du livre. Le sujet poétique est plus stable dans les traductions, moins susceptible de se transformer et de transformer les attentes que la tradition romantique a créées pour la poésie.

Dans les *Fleurs du mal,* ces transformations se réalisent par le développement dialectique des thèmes et des figures. Le recueil s'ouvre sur la question du rapport entre le poète et le lecteur, pour réfléchir ensuite aux aspects différents de la vocation poétique: solitude fondamentale imposée par l'incompréhension des autres; solitude heureuse, créative, ouverte aux voix du monde muet et mystique; nostalgie du passé heureux, riche du potentiel créatif; malédiction du temps qui passe, de la fermeture sur soi-même, de l'impuissance poétique; de la liberté spirituelle et du châtiment qui anéantit cette liberté trop orgueilleusement revendiquée. Puis le thème de l'amour est présenté par une série semblable de thèses et antithèses inversées, contestées et réaffirmées tour à tour. Chaque rapport ou situation que le sujet nous présente est ambigu, évoque à la fois la fascination, la joie, la frustration, la résignation, le désespoir. Même la mort n'arrive pas à briser cette réflexion circulaire. Dans la dernière section du recueil, la mort est perçue comme une possibilité de salut, de repos pour le poète, lui aussi fatigué de son travail. Mais la mort n'est pas moins illusoire et frustrante que la vie, l'amour ou la poésie. Cet ultime désenchantement fait reprendre par le sujet tout le trajet parcouru dans «Le Voyage», muni déjà de «l'amer savoir» que ce voyage apporte, mais réclamant toujours un dernier départ vers le «nouveau». Ainsi *Les Fleurs du mal* se referment-elles sur un cercle vicieux, dans un mouvement impossible à arrêter aussi bien qu'altérer.

Dans *Kurja lilled* et *Väikesed kurja lilled,* ce voyage est simplifié, la dialectique de l'ouvrage disparaît. Le premier la remplace par une structure analytique: le poète se décrit, tour à tour, en fonction de son art, de l'amour, de la souffrance, du milieu social. Il lance les figures dans *Spleen et idéal* et les développe dans les sections qui le suivent, mais il les présente sous quelques angles sélectionnés. La vocation

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[2] Par exemple, les poèmes de *Spleen et idéal* sont présentés dans l'ordre suivant: I–IV => LIII => LXIX => XLIII–XLIV => LXII => LXXIX => LXXXIII => XXIX => LXVII => XXII => LXXVI => LXXV => LXXVIII => XLII => XLV => LVI => LXIV => LXXX => XXXVII => XXIV => LXXIV.

poétique est affirmée et jamais mise en cause; le poète amoureux peut être heureux ou souffrir, mais il n'est pas violent lui-même; le mal et l'ennui qui le hantent ne sont pas remis en cause par les moments de bonheur qui éclairent de temps en temps *Les Fleurs du mal.* Le deuxième recueil est encore moins complexe. Le poète exprime sa vocation, ses désirs, son mal, son ivresse, sa rage, puis sa résignation. On ne voit pas clairement à qui il parle. Le recueil de Sang, comme celui de Baudelaire, est adressé au lecteur: il s'établit comme un lieu de rencontre entre celui-ci et le poète. Hirv n'a pas retenu le poème dédicace, son livre appartient au poète seul.

Il y a pourtant des parallèles importants entre les deux recueils traduits. Leur propre architecture n'est pas tout à fait semblable, mais les sélections et les coupures opérées dans l'ensemble original ont beaucoup en commun (ce n'est que modérément étonnant, vu que Hirv a adopté un grand nombre des textes publiés dans le recueil de 1967). Les poèmes des *Fleurs du mal* dans les deux livres sont découpés en blocs entiers de la structure originale, même si Hirv en a changé l'ordre par la suite. Dans *Spleen et idéal,* la comparaison des deux recueils révèle les séquences suivantes comme favorites des traducteurs estoniens: I–IV («Bénédiction», «L'Albatros», «Élévation», «Correspondances»); XLI–XLV («Tout entière», *Que diras-tu ce soir, pauvre âme solitaire,* «Le Flambeau vivant», «Réversibilité», «Confession»); LXXIII–LXXX («Le Tonneau de la Haine», «La Cloche fêlée», les «Spleen», «Obsession», «Le Goût du néant»); LXXXII–LXXXV («Horreur sympathique», «L'Héautontimoroumé-nos», «L'Irrémédiable», «L'Horloge»). L'image que le sujet poétique donne de lui par ces textes est celle d'un poète heureux, d'un amant mélancolique mais dévoué et d'un homme solitaire souffrant. Dans le recueil de 1967, les contrastes entre ces trois aspects qui se suivent sont assez surprenants. Cela peut être une des raisons pour lesquelles Hirv a choisi de changer l'ordre des poèmes pour substituer à ces péripéties un peu hystériques la continuité d'une voix vaguement triste et solitaire qui proclame sa vocation.

Les trois grandes séquences qui manquent sont les poèmes VII–IX («La Muse malade», «La Muse vénale», «Le Mauvais Moine»); XXV–XXVIII (*Tu mettrais l'univers entier dans ta ruelle,* «Sed non satiata», *Avec ses vêtements ondoyants et nacrés,* «Le Serpent qui danse») et LVII–LXI («À une Madone», «Chanson d'après-midi», «Sisina», «Franciscæ meæ laudes», «À une dame créole»). Les deux

premières évoquent l'échec poétique et la froideur, la cruauté, l'indifférence de la femme dont le poète n'arrive pas à se séparer. La troisième, la plus intéressante, exprime la volonté d'identifier la femme à l'inspiration, l'amour à l'acte poétique. Les figures toujours associées à la création et au bonheur (paresse, chaleur, secret, mystère, état sauvage et libre, jeunesse) y sont abondantes et finissent par l'affirmation explicite que la femme peut inspirer «mille sonnets dans le cœur des poètes» (Baudelaire 1975: 63). En même temps, ces poèmes témoignent clairement que ni l'amour ni la poésie ne sont séparables de la violence, de la frivolité ou de la souffrance d'une âme sensible. Le parallèle entre ces deux passions va beaucoup plus loin chez Baudelaire que la simple observation que les femmes inspirent des sonnets. L'Autre — désirée, adorée, haïe, affreuse — est indispensable pour la création, mais elle est aussi privée de son existence indépendante, elle sert à l'inspiration, au soulagement et au plaisir du sujet, sa signification ne provient pas d'elle-même mais du sujet. Les traducteurs estoniens préfèrent des séquences, des textes et des figures qui permettent de voir une vraie ouverture envers l'Autre. Dans *Kurja lilled* et *Väikesed kurja lilled,* l'amour, qu'il soit heureux ou pas, n'est pas une impasse ambiguë, mais un vrai chemin vers le salut.

Il en est de même pour la poésie. Dans la sixième section de *Kurja lilled,* les figures de la mort du poète, de l'artiste, sont représentées uniquement par «Le Rêve d'un curieux», où la mort se révèle presque illusoire. La réflexion sur la vocation poétique échappe au cercle vicieux: tout le reste est condamné à l'éternelle circulation par «Le Voyage», mais le thème de la poésie, lancé au début du recueil et jamais conclu définitivement, se libère. En revanche, dans la section supplémentaire, *Les Nouvelles Fleurs du mal,* le sujet poétique fait une sorte de voyage de retour, touchant aussi aux thèmes jusqu'alors évités dans le recueil. La révolte sans remords, le refus de tout salut racheté au prix de la liberté dans «Le Rebelle», la détermination de «La Rançon», la sensualité poétique des «Promesses d'un visage» cèdent place à l'isolement du sujet dans «Recueillement». Un dialogue intérieur s'établit, au lieu du discours adressé aux puissances divines et de l'interprétation des messages venant de la part de l'autre. Le poète s'adresse à son deuil qu'il considère comme inévitable: *Talu leebelt, mu lein, oma paratamatus* (Baudelaire 1967: 126). Il ne nécessite donc pas d'explication, c'est une faculté originelle du sujet. Ici se pose son problème fondamental, par le biais d'une figure qui

crée à la fois la distance et l'identité entre le poète et sa douleur. Il faut supporter l'existence parce qu'on n'y peut rien. Dans ce poème, c'est le deuil qui subit cette existence douloureuse d'où on ne peut pas s'échapper, et le poète vient le consoler. Dans les deux derniers poèmes, «Le Gouffre» et «Les Plaintes d'un Icare», il n'est plus en mesure de le faire. Dieu punit le poète blasphémateur en lui imposant des cauchemars. Le sommeil même fait maintenant peur, le néant évoque la jalousie. Certains éléments de ce désespoir étaient déjà présents dans les sections précédentes, mais c'est la première fois que la parole baudelairienne se met en doute elle-même:

> Ah, kõikjal taaren on, nii unelmais kui luules,
> nii teos kui sõnades.
> (Baudelaire 1967: 126)

Dans le dernier poème, la vocation poétique, le voyage autrefois entrepris, devient la raison même de l'échec fondamental et irrésistible dont le sujet est victime:

> Ah iluihk elupikk!
> Selle tõttu mind polnudki kauaks.
> Suren autult, mu jäljetuks hauaks
> on nimetu kuristik.
> (Ib. 128)

Le désir du Beau a consommé la vie et mené le poète au bord du gouffre sans nom qui deviendra sa tombe quand la mort survient. Cette conclusion n'a plus rien de l'optimisme du «Voyage». Cet optimisme n'est évidemment pas facile et naïf: si Baudelaire refuse d'abandonner sa quête du nouveau, ce n'est pas uniquement par courage mais, comme le donne à entendre «Le Voyage», faute de choix. En estonien, le recueil se termine sur le désespoir extrême. Le voyage ne recommence pas. Le cercle vicieux est rompu, mais en-dehors du cercle, il y a le vide.

Dans *Väikesed kurja lilled,* où le poète avait éprouvé quelques doutes et même conclu la première section par «La Cloche fêlée», la section supplémentaire apporte une confirmation ultime de la vocation. Ici, *Les Nouvelles Fleurs du mal* contiennent «Recueillement», «Les Plaintes d'un Icare», «Les Métamorphoses du vampire» et «Épilogue», tiré des projets de l'édition de 1861 des *Fleurs du mal* (Baudelaire 1975: 191). En ce qui concerne les trois premiers poèmes,

l'effet des déclarations lyriques isolées et arbitraires est plus fort que jamais. Mais la fin est intéressante dans sa conviction absolue de la capacité poétique du sujet, de son statut spécial dans le monde, de la possibilité de l'harmonie avec le milieu qui paraît non poétique au premier regard. Dans les traductions estoniennes, le sujet baudelairien a donc quelques convictions de base très fortes: la poésie et l'amour. Leur mise en cause ne fonctionne pas, ou alors elle finit mal — dans la souffrance et la fureur qu'évoquent les doutes affectifs ou dans la mélancolie impuissante, voire le vide absolu de la fin de *Kurja lilled. Les Fleurs du mal* est un voyage qui ne s'arrête pas, même si le voyageur est, tout consciemment, obligé de passer toujours par les mêmes lieux, les mêmes espoirs et déceptions, les mêmes conclusions. Le lecteur, convoqué dès le début pour prendre part à ce voyage, est le seul à pouvoir le terminer, en fermant le livre. Dans les recueils estoniens, le poète ne lui donne pas cette liberté ou ce devoir. Il laisse le lecteur tranquille, mais en revanche, il achève son œuvre tout seul. *Les Fleurs du mal* est un échange, *Kurja lilled* est un monologue, *Väikesed kurja lilled* un soliloque.

2. L'élévation du poète et l'abandon du lecteur

À quoi ressemble cette figure du poète qui devient de plus en plus importante et égocentrique dans chaque traduction? Comment se représente-il? Quel est son rapport avec le monde autour de lui? Le début de «Bénédiction», le premier des quatre poèmes principaux dans la représentation du poète baudelairien dans la traduction estonienne, nous le montre comme un être distingué et supérieur. L'origine de cette suprématie reste plutôt vague dans les deux traductions qui figurent dans les recueils: celui de 1967 contient la version de Johannes Semper, la version de 2000 est faite par Indrek Hirv. Pour autant qu'il soit possible de ne pas être mystique en parlant des puissances suprêmes, les traductions dissipent le mysticisme et les connotations religieuses du vocabulaire. Les «blasphèmes» de la mère deviennent des invectives banales, notamment dans la version de Hirv où la mère du poète devient une femme agressive et obscène. L'acte de langage que commet la mère est sans doute monstrueux: elle maudit son enfant, tout en se livrant au blasphème. Dans un contexte religieusement peu sensible, on peut bien renforcer l'image en mettant

l'accent sur ce premier aspect, humain et social. Ainsi, l'idée romantique de la malédiction du poète ne s'associe pas seulement au mysticisme du destin, mais à l'abandon par les autres, même les plus proches.

En fait, par cette modification, les traducteurs mettent ici en valeur une problématique qui traverse l'écriture baudelairienne et non seulement ces premiers poèmes de *Spleen et idéal*. «Tous ceux qu'il veut aimer l'observent avec crainte», dit Baudelaire dans «Bénédiction». Le poète baudelairien est piégé entre deux mondes. Élu et béni par les puissances suprêmes et vivant en accord avec elles, sans se plaindre, il appartient quand même à «ce monde ennuyé», il veut aimer les autres habitants de ce monde dont il partage essentiellement la vie, sinon les conflits et les cruautés qui lui arrivent ne se produiraient pas:

> Dans le pain et le vin destinés à sa bouche
> Ils mêlent de la cendre avec d'impurs crachats ;
> Avec hypocrisie ils jettent ce qu'il touche,
> Et s'accusent d'avoir mis leurs pieds dans ses pas.
> (Baudelaire 1975: 8)

Il y a donc une certaine proximité avec les autres, une interaction du poète avec le monde: non seulement il est affecté par les hommes autour de lui, il les affecte lui aussi, on peut même supposer qu'il est envoyé pour les affecter. Il ne repousse pas les autres mais les attire plutôt, les incite à lui répondre, à le suivre malgré eux. Cette réciprocité, bien qu'exprimée aussi dans les traductions, y est moins claire, il y a plus d'accidents et de gratuité dans les rencontres du poète avec les autres et dans la cruauté qu'il souffre de leur part. Cela est aussi plus manifeste chez Hirv qui oppose nettement le bon aux méchants:

> Helge, usaldav hing, siiralt pühendund heale,
> kõigis äratab hirmu ja kibestumust.
> Mõned kadedad kannavad keelt tema peale,
> aga vaenavad kõik, hing on kõigil ju must.
>
> Tema rooga nad salaja segavad sülge
> ja ta odavas veinis on pigi ja tuhk ;
> ebausklikult sülgab, kes puutub ta külge,
> et ei korduks see äpardust ennustav puhk
> (Baudelaire 2000: 8)

Baudelaire fait pourtant entendre (comme un écho du poème «Au Lecteur») que ce n'est pas par pure méchanceté (*hing on kõigil ju must*), par peur, honte ou mépris sincère que le poète est persécuté et rejeté, mais par hypocrisie. C'est une chose qui est passée inaperçue chez les deux traducteurs. Là où Baudelaire définit le poète par la projection de multiples voix et points de vue, par des rapports polyphoniques, les traductions restent plus simples. Mais dans la conclusion du poème se produit une inversion dans l'autre sens: à partir de la quatorzième strophe, le poète baudelairien se dégage de cette polyphonie, faisant entendre sa propre voix et s'adressant à son tour à Dieu. Ici, pourtant, les poètes dans les textes estoniens se tournent vers le monde:

> Et les vastes éclairs de son esprit lucide
> Lui dérobent l'aspect des peuples furieux:
> (Baudelaire 1975: 8)

est perçu par Hirv comme une illumination sur le monde ou le pouvoir de le dominer:

> Ent Poeet tõstab pea, vaatab hiilgavat trooni,
> silmad selgust ja valgust — ja pisaraid täis,
> sest ta mõistab ja näeb kõiki inetuid jooni,
> risti jooksvaid ja põimuvaid alatuis päis.
> (Baudelaire 2000: 8)

Cela avait été la première interprétation de Semper aussi quand sa version du poème a été publiée pour la première fois:

> Ta vaimu sähviden selgeks kõik läeb
> Ja paljastub hulkade alatu vale
> (Baudelaire 1926: 478)

Mais *Kurja lilled* contient la version révisée dans laquelle le poète cesse simplement d'entendre le bruit que fait la foule furieuse:

> ta vaimu sähvides selgeks kõik läeb,
> ei kuule ta vihaste hulkade kära.
> (Baudelaire 1967: 10)

Semper précise aussi autre chose: le «moi» exclusif qu'il utilisait dans le discours final du poète en 1925 est remplacé par une articulation plus complexe, le poète ne parle pas uniquement en son nom mais

s'identifie, dans une certaine mesure, aux autres: *Soyez béni, mon Dieu, qui donnez la souffrance / Comme un divin remède de nos impuretés* (Baudelaire 1975: 9). En même temps, il est capable de se regarder à distance, comme une tierce personne: *Je sais que vous gardez une place au Poète* (Ib.). Le poète de Hirv parle uniquement à la première personne. Il devient de son propre chef une puissance suprême: il rejoint les rangs des anges, comprend la sagesse divine et l'essence des choses, peut créer, «à la lumière de ses simples douleurs», des rayons qui reflètent le grand rayon céleste. Au moins, ce sera la compensation pour le poète qui aura défendu la gloire de Dieu sur la terre: *Et mu kroonil kord sädeleks aegade küllus, sinu au kaitsel mul tuleb seista ka siin* (Baudelaire 2000: 9).

L'opposition nette entre les deux plans d'existence que le poète doit savoir gérer se manifeste aussi dans «L'Albatros», poème qui a connu un succès exceptionnel en Estonie. Il existe cinq traductions différentes de «L'Albatros», dont celle d'August Sang, qui figure dans *Kurja lilled,* et celle d'Ants Oras, contenue dans *Väikesed kurja lilled,* sont les plus connues. En termes généraux, les deux versions suivent assez fidèlement la logique baudelairienne: les albatros sont pris par les marins parce qu'ils suivent le navire. Mais ce statut du compagnon de voyage qui ne s'envole jamais définitivement disparaît progressivement dans les deux textes. Quand les albatros de Sang et d'Oras planent dans l'azur, ils ne rencontrent que des éléments, des forces naturelles; l'archer de qui ils se rient — l'Autre — est absent de leur univers. Le poète est seul, son vrai monde n'appartient qu'à lui et il n'a aucun intérêt pour les autres, qui cependant l'attrapent parfois et qui le ridiculisent dans leur propre contexte.

Dans «Élévation», traduite par Oras, l'esprit du poète ressemble beaucoup à l'albatros avec ses deux mouvements: il s'envole vers «l'air supérieur» et «plane sur la vie». Sans vraiment quitter le monde il se trouve quand même sur un plan différent, plus élevé. Oras met en valeur ce dernier aspect, le départ vers les sphères supérieures où l'esprit libéré trouve une autre langue:

> kelle mõtete hoog tunneb koidiku lummust,
> kel taeva poole meel tõuseb rõõmsalt kui lõo –
> kelle vabastet vaim sääl kõrgel, üle nõo
> kuuleb lillede keelt, mõistab asjade tummust!
> (Baudelaire 1967: 13; 2000: 11)

La compréhension des allégories silencieuses de la nature, des «choses muettes», est un aspect essentiel de la vocation poétique chez Baudelaire. C'est l'idée des «Correspondances», aussi traduit par Oras. Dans sa version, la faculté d'entendre le langage du monde muet est encore plus prononcée que dans l'original. Chez Baudelaire, la parole réside vraiment dans la nature, dans les objets extérieurs, le poète est doué d'une grande capacité de réception, mais c'est une capacité passive. L'homme est le sujet d'un seul verbe — *passer;* toute autre action a son origine ailleurs:

> La Nature est un temple où de vivants piliers
> Laissent parfois sortir de confuses paroles ;
> L'homme y passe à travers de forêts de symboles
> Qui l'observent avec des regards familiers.
> (Baudelaire 1975: 11)

Chez Oras, l'homme a un peu plus d'initiative dans la création du sens poétique du monde:

> Suur templisammastik on loodus — elav saal,
> kus inimene käib kesk sümbolite hiisi:
> nende sosinas kõrv kuuleb tuttavat viisi,
> salasõnumeid täis on pühalik portaal.
> (Baudelaire 1967: 14; 2000: 12)

C'est lui qui perçoit un air familier dans le murmure des forêts qui, elles, ne communiquent pas avec lui d'une façon si active que dans le poème de Baudelaire. La Nature des «Correspondances» ne contient pas de sens d'une façon passive, elle n'est pas loin de l'imposer à l'homme (ce qu'elle fera plus tard dans «Obsession»).

L'espace poétique qu'habite l'homme baudelairien est un lieu de réciprocité où les objets sont parfois des complices, parfois des ennemis ou des victimes (ces statuts ne sont pas fixés, mais évoluent au cours des poèmes et des sections). Les traductions le transforment, plus ou moins subtilement, en un lieu où le sujet se trouve seul, qui lui permet de se distinguer du reste du monde et qui n'est pas un lieu à partager avec le lecteur, le public, la foule qui risque de ne pas en être digne, ce qui est plus facile à transmettre et plus compréhensible. L'idée que les traducteurs estoniens se font du poète est celle de l'autosuffisance. Le poète est censé être aux prises avec les autres, pas vraiment avec lui-même. Les obstacles qui se présentent relèvent du monde, pas du sujet, contrairement aux *Fleurs du mal.* Là, le mal le

plus profond est celui qui vient de la mise en cause de la vocation[3]. Comme il y a les déceptions dans l'amour, la poésie aussi est susceptible de souffrir de l'impuissance ou de la prostitution. L'isolement dans l'univers subjectif, bien qu'il protège contre le monde méchant, est difficile à supporter. La révolte contre sa situation, célébrée dans «Don Juan aux enfers» et dans les poèmes de la *Révolte,* qui sont parmi les plus anciens et les mieux connus en Estonie, trouve aussi son châtiment, l'ultime blasphème ne va pas être toléré («Châtiment de l'orgueil»). L'homme se heurte partout à ses limites.

Comme ces limites ne se révèlent pas si nettement dans les traductions, leurs contreparties ne s'actualisent pas non plus. Le sujet ne se livre pas à la nostalgie de l'état poétique et heureux qui appartiendrait aux époques lointaines abstraites ou à la mémoire, comme dans *J'aime le souvenir de ces époques nues*, «La Vie antérieure» ou «Bohémiens en voyage», «Le Balcon» ou *Je n'ai pas oublié, voisine de la ville.* C'est une nostalgie du temps où les efforts n'étaient pas nécessaires pour la création, pour la perception des significations mystérieuses qui remplissaient l'univers, pour l'intimité et la proximité. Mais le mal d'avoir perdu cette capacité antique et d'autrefois, l'accès facile à la parole et aux rapports humains, n'inspire pas uniquement de nostalgie, mais se transforme aussi en agressivité. Comme il impose sa volonté et son imagination à la figure de la femme, le poète des *Fleurs du mal* joue avec l'image du lecteur. Loin d'être seulement une victime humiliée, comme l'albatros, le poète baudelairien a du pouvoir sur le lecteur. Les poèmes où celui-ci apparaît explicitement ne sont pas nombreux, mais leur absence des recueils estoniens et le manque d'intérêt pour eux parmi les traducteurs sont signifiantes. Dans les pièces XXXVIII («Un fantôme») et XXXIX (*Je te donne ces vers afin que si mon nom*), il s'agit du double jeu de la recherche de la complicité (*Lecteur, as-tu parfois respiré...* (Baudelaire 1975: 39)) et de la vengeance (*afin que ... ta mémoire, pareille aux faibles incertaines, fatigue le lecteur ainsi qu'un tympanon* (ib. 40). La solitude baudelairienne est donc une solitude ambiguë: voulue et horrible, désespérée et violente, poétique et vide de sens, inguérissable et hypocrite.

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[3] Voir relativement à cela Scepi 2003.

Enfin, la volonté transformante n'est pas dirigée uniquement contre l'Autre. Le sujet baudelairien se transforme aussi lui-même pour arriver à mieux comprendre et accepter son état. Dans les poèmes LXV–LXIX («Tristesses de la lune», «Les Chats», «Les Hiboux», «La Pipe», «La Musique»), une série de miroirs abstraits et solitaires se présente. Ces textes, dont seulement «Les Hiboux» figure dans les deux recueils estoniens et «La Musique» dans *Väikesed kurja lilled,* reprennent l'image du poète sous la forme de créatures non humaines: la Lune, les chats, les hiboux, la pipe et, finalement, la musique et la mer. Le poète cherche à se regarder comme un autre, à travers les apparences et les signes extérieurs. Le regard de l'Autre (comme le regard familier de la Nature dans «Correspondances», transformé en «air familier» dans la traduction), la présence du lecteur, est une partie intégrante de l'univers du sujet baudelairien. Si le poète des *Fleurs du mal* fait tant d'efforts pour toucher, frapper, séduire ou attaquer l'Autre, c'est parce qu'il a reconnu la dépendance de son être par rapport à ce regard, l'impossibilité de sortir du jeu infini des regards et des images changeantes qu'on crée réciproquement et dont l'incompatibilité est l'une des sources du mal qui le hante.

La situation du sujet poétique baudelairien ne s'actualise pas entièrement dans les deux recueils estoniens qui transforment l'architecture des *Fleurs du mal*, la structure du livre et des figures. Baudelaire ne parle pas tout seul, pour lui-même. Il suppose chez le lecteur une disposition semblable à la sienne, l'appelle son semblable et son frère, cherche à se faire écouter, à engager le lecteur à l'action poétique (Pichois 1976: 216), même par l'agression contre son public et la mise en cause de sa propre œuvre (Thélot 1993: 35–38). Son rapport avec le lecteur est donc aussi ambigu et redoublé, mais c'est un rapport auquel le lecteur est obligé de participer activement parce qu'il ne se trouve pas dans la position du simple témoin de l'inspiration lyrique du poète, comme l'avait déjà soupçonné Barbey d'Aurevilly. *Lis-moi pour apprendre à m'aimer !* commande Baudelaire dans «Épigraphe pour un livre condamné» (Baudelaire 1975: 137). L'ensemble des *Fleurs du mal* est chargé de cette même insistance. L'éclatement de l'ensemble fait disparaître cette tension.

Les recueils estoniens, *Kurja lilled* et *Väikesed kurja lilled,* laissent le lecteur tranquille. Le poète s'y représente comme une figure solitaire, mélancolique, expulsée ou persécutée par les autres. De son côté, il cherche aussi de l'opposition et de la distance. Il se réjouit de sa

maîtrise de la parole et du sens qui lui permettent de faire le bilan de ses états d'âme. C'est une figure romantique, familière aux lecteurs estoniens qui devraient se sentir d'autant plus à leur aise que ce poète leur laisse le statut de simple témoin ou ne relève pas du tout leur présence. Pour Baudelaire, le lecteur est le miroir du poète: c'est par l'écriture qui s'actualise devant ses yeux que le poète peut construire et faire reconnaître son image. Dans les traductions cela n'est plus évident. Mais c'est parce que les traducteurs, me semble-t-il, ont adopté, au fond, ce procédé. Dans leur réécriture de la poésie de Baudelaire, ils construisent une image du poète à leur guise. À la fois lecteurs et poètes, ils prennent Baudelaire comme leur miroir et lui imposent l'image qu'ils ont de leur vocation commune. Si la logique baudelairienne qui organise l'architecture de son livre ne se fait pas entendre dans ces deux recueils, c'est parce qu'elle fonctionne trop bien.

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TARTU UNIVERSITY PRESS
Tiigi 78 · 50410 Tartu · Estonia

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The ESTONIAN LITERARY MAGAZINE's editorial staff can be reached at the following address:

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ISSN 1406–0701
ISBN 9949–11–136–6

interlitteraria
10 · 2005

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PRESS

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50410 Tartu
Estonia